Activities and Prosocial Behaviour in Vertical Tutor Groups

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Abstract

Both schools and society have a strong interest in promoting young people's willingness and capacity for prosocial behaviour. Vertical Tutoring, a pastoral system whereby students are organised into mixed age tutor groups, has been claimed by its supporters to promote aspects of prosocial behaviour. However, only a few researchers have examined Vertical Tutoring in depth and none have explored the micro-detail of their activities and any relationship with prosocial behaviour.

The writer seeks to address this through a mixed-method qualitative case study of the activities and prosocial behaviour in two vertical tutor groups at a challenging comprehensive school near London. He uses a series of focused observations, interviews with students and tutors, and a focus group of students, to collect data and Bar-Tal and Raviv's six phase model of the cognitive development of helping behaviour, and the five techniques they identify for promoting it, as a framework for exploring the possible relationship between the structured activities students do in tutor time and any prosocial acts they perform.

The writer finds that the most significant activities in the development of students' willingness and capacity to behave prosocially seem to be the ones which familiarise the students with each other and create a bond between them. This leads to his contribution of a sixth technique for promoting the cognitive development of prosocial behaviour, in addition to the five already identified by Bar-Tal and Raviv. He also contributes a refinement to their six phase model, recommending the subdivision of the fifth phase into two levels dependent on the degree to which an individual generalises their perception of a general social contract of reciprocity.

Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

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2,000 Word Statement

Before I started the EdD in 2004, I believed that education had a higher purpose and that diligent research could prove that one way of doing it was better than another. In the subsequent eight years of study, one of those beliefs was reinforced beyond doubt and the other was demolished.

With regard to education's higher purpose, I had always believed that although qualifications were very important, what mattered even more was that but that even more essential was that students left the school as well-rounded young men and women who could think for themselves and work well with others. That, I had always felt, required professionals who were driven by the desire to engage and nurture other people, not hit targets like mobile phone salesmen.

In 2004 that first belief already seemed to be under sustained attack. The league tables, micro-managed four part lessons and Ofsted inspections which I had encountered in my first four years of professional practice seemed anathema to the idea of nurturing whole people; the EdD's first module, Foundations of Professionalism in Education, gave me a name for this anathema - 'the new managerialism'. It also helped me to understand where new-managerialism came from and why it was there. I saw that there was a desperate desire to pin down what a good school was and force it to be replicated by holding teachers to account for measurable outcomes. I learned how this need to quantify education and an education institution's success defined its values and sometimes led to other aspects being devalued. This conflict inspired my first assignment, *How does the drive for improvement in academic performance in academic performance in a grammar school conflict with the professional ethics of a Head of Year?*, in which I used a critical incident in my career as the basis for a consideration of professional ethics; specifically the way in which one professional motivation, the need to achieve the best possible results for the school, could conflict with another, the need to look after the best interests of an individual. This gave me a good opportunity to reflect on the nature of teacher professionalism in a new managerialist environment and I came to the conclusion that the way society measures

success in education, and therefore what it values, must evolve to reflect the complexity of the teacher's professional role. Looking back now, I also think it started me down the road to wondering how the institutions might be remade in some way to put these conflicting goals in harmony.

In the next two modules, Methods of Enquiry 1 and 2 (MOE 1 and 2), I learned how the different approaches to valuing education and the teaching profession were, to an extent, mirrored in different approaches to researching it. In fact, to me they have become inextricably linked: how you see education depends on how you look at it and what you can say about it ought to be qualified by the limitations of methodology. This led to the demolition of my second pre-EdD belief, that the general superiority of one pedagogy over another could ever be proved, any more than the superiority of one catfood could be proved. I learned that positivist methods were unworkable in a social environment where variables cannot be isolated or controlled.

I was a little disappointed at first that it would not be possible to prove that Mr Best's brilliant ideas were the future of education but I did see the opportunity to further explore values and the way they influenced, or were influenced by, the systems within which they existed. My second assignment (MOE 1), *From SMT to SLT: Developments in Leadership Values at Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School*, explored concepts of educational leadership and my own institution's leaders' real life attempt to refocus their values by changing their name from the Senior Management Team to the Senior Leadership team.

Unfortunately, although this assignment passed, the practical research assignment (MOE 2) it led to *What's in a name? The transition from SMT to SLT at a secondary school*, failed because it was flawed in three ways. Firstly, it did not ask questions which would lead to the collection of any very meaningful data. Secondly, the data I did collect was even more limited than the research questions demanded, being based on only a handful of short questionnaires and a few documents, when I could have followed these up with interviews. Thirdly, although I tried to analyse the responses through what I

thought at the time was a post-modernist deconstruction, in fact all I did was describe them.

It was a blow to have my assignment referred but it did teach me the invaluable lessons of narrowing my research questions and designing research to answer them. My second MOE 2 assignment was entitled *Year 7-11 Students' Motivation Profiles at a London Secondary School*, and used a questionnaire to study students' self-reported motivation in relation to Hayamizu's Stepping Scale. This work was more firmly grounded in existing research and theory, asked more interesting questions than why managers redesignated themselves and used research methods which collected sufficient valid data. It also developed my interest in concrete ways in which systems can be changed to centre learning on the student. Further inspired by John West-Burnham's lecture on learning-centred education, and writers such as Brandes, Ginnis and Brown, my Initial Specialist Course (Leadership and Learning) assignment was entitled *From work to learning: an exploration of ways in which learning can be refocused onto the student at a London grammar school*. This began with a semantic question: 'work or learning?', which examined the way in which learning activity at secondary school was seen and valued, and was somewhat akin to the 'management or leadership?' discussion in my MOE 1, but it found more significant differences and possibilities for change. It also gave me the opportunity to reflect on my own experience, informed by existing research and theories.

Discussions about learning with my supervisor, Dr Caroline Lodge and my own work and reading in this area, led me to read a great deal about the use of group project-work and problem-based tasks, particularly in high schools in South Korea and Singapore, and in medical education. The research suggested that these kind of activities could provide for much deeper, more student-centred and more intrinsically motivated learning in a school like mine, but that there were also some difficulties in practice, often centred around relationships between students in the groups, which chimed with my own classroom experience.

My professional life at the time (as a middle-leader involved in implementing a new head teacher's School Improvement Plan) was also showing me how difficult it could be to alter establish patterns of teaching and learning, and for my Institution Focused Study (IFS) I proposed to do a case study on the use of a style of group project-work in the context of an exam class (the type whose achievement and independence in learning the SIP was focused on raising).

For my IFS I used a mixed method approach to examine an example of project-based learning in groups in my own classroom. I found this extremely rewarding, both as a teacher and a researcher, because the combination of post-activity questionnaires, field notes and a focus group made it such a collaborative process with my student-participants, who knew from the beginning that they were involved in a piece of research. Althouth I was aware that this might affect their responses, I think this was outweighed by the advantage of them reflecting deeply on their own learning relationships and discussing them with each other, which provided me with a great deal of qualitative data. My experience using this methodology for collecting data in a case study about classroom activity also became invaluable when I did my final thesis.

Another influence on my final thesis came from something my students said in the focus group. They reported that they had really liked getting to know people that they would not normally have chosen to work with and it appeared that being 'forced' to mix led not only to productive learning activities, but to more inclusive attitudes and a kind of *Breakfast Club**[1] high (my analogy). Although I had not heard of Vertical Tutoring or Vertical Learning at that time, my participants' comments came back to me with added resonance when I did.

Based on my original interest in student-centred learning, books and articles suggested by my new supervisor, Adam Lefstein, and my continuing experience in school leadership, I became particularly interested in the difficulty English

[1] 'The Breakfast Club' is a 1985 film in which five students from different cliques in the same American high school (a geek, a goth, a jock, a posh girl and an underclass boy) are forced to mix by way of a Saturday detention, and all end up seeing each other in a new and positive way.

secondary schools seemed to face in translating what I came to call the 'standard ideal' of learning (student-centred, collaborative, deep, intrinsically motivated, etc) into reality within what I called the 'standard model' of schooling (year groups, curriculum, timetable, classroom, single class teacher, large number of students, etc). Despite decades of initiatives I felt that the experience of secondary school students seemed largely unchanged and that the realities of the standard model make genuine student-centred learning very hard to achieve.

I also felt that it was very hard to complete a doctorate while working full-time as an assistant head teacher so in July 2010, with the support of my wife and fellow IOE doctoral student, Qiong Xu, I decided to give up work for a year to focus on researching and writing my thesis. Based on what I learned about students working in more diverse groups from my IFS, my professional experience dealing with adolescents' relationship problems and my intuition that the standard ideal could only be achieved by adjusting the standard model, I decided to look at Vertical Tutoring, which a colleague had described to me and which was becoming popular in other schools in my area.

The process I went through ito take my final research from idea to finished thesis is fully described in the work itself. However, I want to highlight a couple of the key points I had to overcome in order to complete it. One was the issue of generalisability. This was perhaps a hangover from the days when I wanted to 'prove' that one way was always better than another, but it was also rooted in the need for my thesis to be of value to my profession – to answer the 'so what?' question. My interest in the micro-detail of how activities in vertical tutor groups could promote pro-social behaviour pointed me towards a case study approach but this made generalisability to tutor groups outside the case very hard. My new new supervisor, Dr Eleanore Hargreaves, suggested that the answer to this dilemma might be Bassey's alternative to generalisability, relatability, and after reading his 1981 article I saw how even single school case studies could be generally useful to other professionals. Indeed, I think the idea that informed professionals read research and then relate it to their own context, making the

process a much more interactive process between researcher and practioner, actually recognises a reality for all academic research.

The other issue I had to resolve, which was also a hangover from my old days, was my tendency to be interested in too many things at once, and to ask too broad questions. This was, as is discussed in the following thesis, resolved by doing some exploratory research to find the ones that most needed to be (and could), be examined in depth.

In summary, the last eight years have demolished my belief that the general superiority of one pedagogy can be proved in theory but replaced it with an understanding of how research can improve education in practice, by informing the choices of fellow professionals. As for my conviction that education does have a higher purpose, this has been reinforced by all the reading and research I have done, and all the people I have worked with. However, activities in mixed age groups is only one way this higher purpose can be achieved.

CHAPTER 1 – RATIONALE

1.1. My interest in pastoral structures and prosocial behaviour

My rationale for investigating the use of activities to promote prosocial behaviour in Vertical Tutor Groups (VTGs) arises from my experience of Horizontal Tutoring (HT), both as a pupil and a professional in secondary schools.

1.1.1 My experience as a pupil

One day when I was in Year 7, a boy from a different tutor group came into my tutor group and attacked one of my fellow tutees, Pupil A. None of us intervened because none of us was friends with Pupil A. I remember our tutor castigating us for this later but I only remember feeling vaguely guilty and do not remember any collective expression of shame. I cannot speak for the others but I did not see any reason to get into a fight for the sake of someone I did not know anything about except that he was generally unpopular. We were at a boys' comprehensive school and in our tutor group people stuck with their small group of friends. I remember there being a definite pecking order and, apart from those close friends, we were much more likely to put each other down than help each other out. By Year 11 the situation was more relaxed; people still stuck with their close friends (who were by then very close) but were generally amiable towards others or left them alone. When, during my review of social psychological literature about prosocial behaviour, I read about the famous murder of Kitty Genovese in which more than 30 neighbours were believed to have heard the victim's screams without intervening in any way, I could not help seeing the similarity between the two events and wonder what it takes to make young people in tutor groups step off the sidelines and behave in a prosocial way (Hogg and Vaughan, 2008). Although it has now been shown that neighbours were neither as aware of the danger Kitty Genovese was in nor as inactive as has been believed (Manning, Levine and Collins, 2012) (Manning, Levine and Collins, 2012), the 'bystander effect' found by the research those

beliefs motivated has a strong evidence base (Darley and Latane, 1968; Moore and Underwood, 1982; Penner *et al*, 2005; Piliavin *et al*, 1981).

1.1.2 My experience as a professional

Eighteen years after we all stood by when Pupil A got punched in the face, I became a tutor at a large mixed secondary school. Although I did do developmental activities with my tutor group, such as cajoling them to plan and deliver a form assembly, most of my time and energy was spent on dealing with them when they behaved badly towards teachers or each other. Although most pupils appeared to have close friends and were usually happy to help staff when asked, most groups within the tutor group seemed quite separate and there seemed to be little prosocial behaviour between tutees who were not close friends.

When I became a head of year at the same school, my first priority was meant to be raising my year group's academic achievement (in fact we were renamed heads of learning to emphasise this focus) but although I never kept a time diary I estimate that this still came second to dealing with behaviour in terms of working time spent. This was even though behaviour at the school was generally very good (Ofsted, 2004). I estimate that time spent on action to develop prosocial behaviour came a poor third.

Later, as an assistant headteacher at a girls' school I was responsible for all aspects of pastoral care and student development. Although standards of behaviour were excellent (Ofsted, 2009b) I was struck by the frequency and intensity of peer-to-peer relationship problems, mostly within tutor groups. I had expected that (and I admit to the sexist assumption), without any boys to compete over, the girls' relationships might be quite stable but that was not the case. The break-up and realignment of friendships, especially in Years 7-9, seemed to be an almost constant event and although the frequency might have been exaggerated in my mind due to my responsibility for dealing with the consequences and the amount of my time that took up, the thick file of incident reports and witness statements I accumulated was real. As in my own experience as a schoolboy there was a strong sense of a social pecking order

in each tutor group, and although friendships were highly valued allegiances frequently changed. While girls could be very supportive of their friends they could also completely ignore or spitefully put down a peer who had fallen out of favour. The situation tended to improve as the pupils matured but apart from a few exceptions, most tutor groups matured into rooms of small friendship groups that left each other alone rather than being like a whole family.

Reflecting on this evidence it seemed to me that there was an intense competition between a minority of girls in each tutor group for a high place in the social hierarchy. Although the majority of girls seemed to be happy and to have a relatively stable circle of close friends, they were still often dragged into the conflict because the protagonists would try to get the rest of the tutor group to take sides. In my opinion this was the major cause of unhappiness at the school and a serious distraction for both pupils and staff from the business of learning.

1.1.3 Why I became interested in vertical tutoring as a solution

While I was first getting to grips with this issue, one of the progress managers in my pastoral team told me about her daughter's school, which was mixed and had vertical tutor groups. She said her daughter really liked the vertical tutoring, that pupil relationships at the school seemed to be much more stable, that her daughter had 'healthy' friendships with pupils both older and younger than herself and that it seemed to have had a positive impact on her maturity. Given my professional role I was naturally very interested and wanted to know more.

At about the same time I read an *Economist* article (The Economist, 2008) which suggested that from a Darwinian perspective, the assumption that young adults could be educated didactically in large groups was questionable. Although it did not elaborate why, I speculated that one of the reasons (apart from the general human dislike of being stuck in a room and told what to do) might be the tendency of people in large groups to behave in ways they wouldn't if they were alone or in a small group. In my professional roles I had dealt with challenging young people on many occasions, but when they were on

their own it was always possible to do it in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Only when there were a lot the pupils of similar age together would the atmosphere ever become really unpleasant. In addition, it was usually only when they were in large groups that normally unchallenging young people might behave badly. I also read about the work of behavioural economists who promoted the concept of 'choice architecture' (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008), whereby the 'automatic' aspects of people's decision-making behaviour are considered in the design of the contexts in which they encounter those choices. I began to wonder if large, homogenous groups of young people might be automatically predisposed to rivalry and fragmentation into cliques and that the key to encouraging prosocial behaviour might be a more age-diverse, vertical structure.

1.2 Defining prosocial behaviour

Writers on prosocial behaviour offer a variety of definitions, but what all those I have read have in common is their concept of its intended outcome: the benefit of others (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Bierhoff, 2005; Darley and Latane, 1968; Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990; Hogg and Vaughan, 2008; Lee et al, 2012; Moore and Underwood, 1982; Staub, 1975). However, where they sometimes differ is in their concept of the motivation for this behaviour. For the reader, making sense of these differences is further complicated by the use of other terms, particularly 'helping behaviour' and 'altruistic behaviour' or 'altruisim', which are sometimes used interchangeably and sometimes to describe distinct variations.

The key disagreement in their concept of motivation in prosocial behaviour is whether or not the actor can be motivated by any benefit to themselves. Whilst some state clearly that prosocial behaviour cannot be for extrinsic reward, such as financial remuneration, and none allow that it could be, some also accept that the actor may be motivated by intrinsic benefits such as the alleviation of their own distress or the desire for social approval (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Bierhoff, 2005; Eisenberg, 1982a; Hogg and Vaughan, 2008). The way some writers solve this problem is to use the term helping behaviour to describe

anything done to benefit another person, whatever the motivation; prosocial behaviour to describe help for which the actor receives no tangible extrinsic reward and altruistic behaviour to describe help which is done purely out of empathy for the recipient and a desire to benefit them (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Bierhoff, 2005).

This concept of different degrees of prosociality, with helping for extrinsic reward at the bottom and pure altruism at the top, is often wedded to theories of cognitive development, whereby the abilities to put oneself in another's shoes – perspective-taking – and imagine how they feel – empathising, are mental capabilities which need to develop in the individual. This is an attractive concept for a teacher already engaged in attempting to develop the cognitive abilities of young people and with an interest in motivating them to behave prosocially, and so it is a theory which helps to inform my research (see Chapters 2 and 3). Unfortunately, this interest in assessing motivation in order to perceive prosocial behaviour leads to a methodological problem for anyone wishing to research the promotion of prosocial behaviour because motivations may be complicated and can be hard for the actor, let alone the observer, to percieve (Bierhoff, 2005; Eisenberg, 1982a).

Writers on prosociality also sometimes differ about other criteria they set for an action to be termed prosocial. For example, Bierhoff states that the recipient must be an individual rather than an organisation (Bierhoff, 2005) whereas Lee says it may include activities which are 'community or civic-minded, that have the effect of helping society, community and institutions function effectively' (Lee et al, 2012, p. 7). This leads into the problem of classifying the form of prosocial behaviour. Donating money to a charity for the homeless, giving your sandwiches to a homeless person and working in a soup kitchen on Christmas Eve could all be described as prosocial behaviour but they are clearly different.
Smithson, Amato and Pearce developed a classification system using three dimensions: the first was the degree to which the help was planned or spontaneous; the second was the degree of seriousness of the situation; the third was how direct or indirect the help was (Smithson, Amato and Pearce, 1983). However, the problem I perceive with this approach is that the degrees

of seriousness and directness might be very subjective and depend on value judgements and other researchers have avoided trying to differentiate between the types of help.

In conclusion, to allow some flexibility in exploring the promotion of prosocial behaviour in secondary schools, Hogg and Vaughan's definition that prosocial behaviour is 'voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another' was used (Hogg and Vaughan, 2008, p. 540). The word 'voluntary' implies that the actor could choose not to help and is not helping as part of a paid occupation but does not necessarily preclude some benefit to the actor or that the actor may have taken on some kind of role. This is important because, as will be shown in the following chapters, role-playing is one of the techniques claimed to assist in the promotion of prosocial behaviour and one of the activities the proponents of Vertical Tutoring claim is facilitated by mixed-age tutor groups. I would add that in my definition the recipients of help may be individuals, organisations or the community as a whole. I will also be using the theory of phases of helping behaviour development put forward by Daniel Bar-Tal and Amiram Raviv, to discuss the development of prosocial behaviour in students (see 2.4).

1.3 Do schools and tutor groups have a role in promoting prosocial behaviour?

Definitions of the roles of education vary much more widely than definitions of prosocial behaviour and appear to depend very much on the interests of the author of each definition (Harris, 1999). During my own career I have seen secondary schools' roles include: teaching students to put on condoms and open bank accounts (not at the same time); organise anti-bullying weeks and mass vaccinations; participate in external 'Young Mayor' elections; complete local authority surveys and make more young people cycle to school. Some of these roles were statutorily imposed by government and some were requested by non-governmental organisations who were hard to refuse; it seems there are a great many bodies which want to influence young people to do things which those bodies think are beneficial to the wider community and, because schools

have large numbers of young people together in one place for at least twenty-five hours a week, it is convenient for those bodies to assign schools the role of exerting those influences.

It has certainly been the position of successive British governments that schools have some responsibility for more than just the academic educaion of their students. As well as being responsible for the general well-being and personal development of their pupils (HMI, 1989), successive acts of parliament have made it ever more explicit that a school's duties include development of their students as constructive members of society for the future (Children Act, 2004; Education Act, 1944; Education Act, 1993; The Education Reform Act, 1988). Indeed, the fourth of the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework (which was still in force when I did my case study), that children should make a positive contribution to society, clearly depends on the development of prosocial behaviour in pupils (Children Act, 2004). Although some of the decisions of Michael Gove, the current Secretary of State for Education, would suggest a move towards a narrow focus on academic attainment, his party's vision of a 'Big Society' suggests an enthusiasm for prosocial activity. In addition, a recent Department for Education study found that, for 16-19 year olds, schools play a central role in providing opportunities for prosocial activity, especially for young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Lee *et al*, 2012).

Although, governmental enthusiasm for something is certainly no guarrantee of it being a good thing, there is also academic support for the role of schools in developing the inclination and capacity of young people to make a prosocial contribution to society, as well as learn academic abilities. John White says that, in addition to the development of basic skills, students' involvement in society is also important and schools should have a sharp focus on fulfilment and values (White, 2007). Even though this is a broader aim than the promotion of helping behaviour that my study wishes to focus on, it supports the development of the same kind of moral-reasoning that higher levels of prosocial behaviour are believed by cognitive theorists to require (see 2.3-2.4). There is also some evidence to support the idea that, *assuming* students' prosocial behaviour towards each other has a beneficial impact on their emotional wellbeing, it

might also improve educational outcomes. Gutman and Vorhaus found that children with better 'emotional, behavioural, social and school wellbeing' (p3) were generally more engaged in school and had higher academic achievement (Gutman and Vorhaus, 2012, p. 3). The recent enthusiasm for Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) in schools is also evidence of a belief, amongst many professionals involved in education, that schools have a role in the development of social skills and emotional wellbeing, including the development of the empathy (Stuart, 2010) which increases higher level prosocial behaviour (see Chapter 2.3-2.4 and 2.7.2).

Fielding goes even further, arguing that, at present, schools promote too much competition and are too focused on function and performativity, at the expense of each individual's holistic personal development (Fielding, 2007). Fielding advocates 'person-centred learning communities' in which the emphasis is on developing cooperation and building a community and the organisation exists, and is structured, to promote interpersonal relationships (Fielding, 2007) Indeed, his belief that secondary schools should be made smaller by creating 'schools-within-schools' (Fielding, 2007, p. 403) resonates with what many VT schools say they are trying to achieve by dividing themselves into smaller, vertically organised houses or colleges where the smaller numbers facilitate people getting to know each other.

However, although I cannot find any writer who says that prosocial behaviour, when it happens, is undesirable, there are strong arguments against schools being given the role developing young people's social and emotional skills. I know from experience that the non-academic roles given to schools place a significant extra burden on the time and energies of both staff and students, and whilst most people appear to accept that it is part of a secondary school's role to teach specialist academic subjects which require teachers with specialist knowledge, there is much more debate about whether or not schools have a duty to prepare the individual to contribute to society (Pring, 1999; Standish, 1999; Wringe, 1988). Some might say that schools would serve their students' and society's interests better if they concentrated entirely on academic learning

and left the promotion of prosocial behaviour to parents, religious leaders, the media.

Ecclestone and Hayes have even argued that education has become dangerously therapeutic and that SEAL actually diminishes and disempowers young people by assuming emotional weakness and damage, turning the young person's attention inward and away from dealing with real world problems (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009b). They see the therapeutisation of education as part of a damaging trend in western society (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009a) and it could be argued that to encourage helping behaviour, especially of the stereotypical strong helping the weak kind, is to encourage young people to assme weakness and then patronise it. This could further disempower or exclude some people by perpetuating attitudes towards the abilities of certain groups (for instance women or people in developing countries). It might be very hard to teach moral reasoning without imposing the teacher's – or the school's or the government's – moral values.

Finally, it might even be argued by some that, if a school's role is to prepare the individual for success in adult life, then in a competitive, market-oriented economic environment, this success would be enhanced by an ultra-competitive, 'me-first' attitude, rather than a prosocial one.

My own view is that, even if Ecclestone and Hayes are right that SEAL does assume weakness and encourage introspection, the promotion of what I define as prosocial behaviour (see 1.2) by school-age children actually assumes strength and independence (in their capacity to help others) and encourages an active engagement with real world problems. Enhanced emotional wellbeing on the part of the actor and beneficiary may be two of the outcomes of a prosocial act but they are not necessarily the primary aims or the most important results. For me, the primary aims are to make the students' world a safer, healthier, happier and more productive place.

I believe that schools have an important role in promoting this, not because their concentration of young people in one place for five days a week makes it

convenient, but because whether they try to or not, schools *will* teach young people something about prosocial behaviour. Situations in which individuals need help inevitably arise in everyday life and children spend a large part of their everyday life in school. First of all, individuals need the cognitive capacity to notice these situations. A number of cognitive theorists believe that this cognitive capacity tends to develop with age (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Eisenberg, 1986; Lehalle, 2006) and so whether or not schools try to promote prosocial behaviour, young people will notice some of these situations (especially the situations when they need help themselves). When they do, they will (if they are not the one in need of help) make a choice – whether it is to help or do nothing – and then there will be an outcome, even if the outcome is that nothing happens to them. Then, I argue, they will learn something from that outcome, even if what they learn is that nothing happens to them when they do nothing about something that is happening to someone else. Of course what the individual who needed help might learn is that when they needed it, nobody helped them. Although people and situations vary greatly and there will be many occasions in any school when people need help and are offered it by someone, if the culture in the school is one in which people tend not to – perhaps unless they are already close friends or paid adults – then I would argue that those young people will learn that generally people do not offer help to, or ask for help from, those who are not already friends or are paid to do so. All this will be learned without the school *trying* to teach them anything at all about prosocial behaviour. I therefore argue that schools cannot avoid playing a role in the development of prosocial behaviour, irrespective of anyone's beliefs about whether or not that is right, and so it is better for both the individual student and the wider community if they play that role positively.

1.4 Why tutor groups are vehicles for pastoral care and the promotion of caring

There is nothing in any of the government acts above which insists that secondary school pupils must spend half an hour a day with someone called a tutor in order that the school's non-academic roles be discharged. There is also academic debate over the exact meaning of pastoral care (Best *et al*, 1995),

and whether it is ultimately for the purposes of compassion or control (Power, 1996). However, there are quite practical reasons why 'the form tutor is the heart' of both caring for students and promoting caring behavour (Marland and Rogers, 2004, p. 1) and that this is not left to learning in subjects across the curriculum. In order to understand these reasons though it is necessary to understand why tutor groups exist in secondary schools.

In primary schools each child has one teacher for all or most of their lessons, so that teacher will know them very well and can consider their general well-being and personal development in every aspect of their school life. However in secondary school, a pupil will have many different teachers, none for more than a few hours a week. Most of those teachers will in turn teach well over a hundred pupils every week, and each teacher's focus will be their students' learning in their subject because of the pressures of covering syllabuses. All the schools I have worked in seek to promote good behaviour in all aspects of school life and much may be learned about prosocial behaviour both in the content of subjects (for example the black civil rights movement in History) and the way in which those subjects are learned (for example working with a partner to do an experiment in Chemistry). However, in secondary schools there is no single teacher 'whose subject is the pupil herself' (Marland and Rogers, 2004, p. 1). An obvious solution is to assign pupils to teachers whose responsibility is to know them well and consider their general well-being and development, and to give them a regular timetabled session in which to do it. This then provides not only a teacher for the student's non-academic needs and development, but time in which they can work together.

1.5 The nature of tutor groups and the organisational difference between Horizontal and Vertical Tutoring

In a contemporary English secondary school, a *tutor group* (also known as a *form*, *form group* or registration group) is an organisational unit of pupils placed together under the supervision of a *form tutor* for the purpose of pastoral care and general administration. In most schools I have been to or heard about the tutor has their tutor group for a short session of around 20-30 minutes every

day, typically first thing in the morning. This is often referred to as *tutor time*, *form time* or *registration*.

In most state secondary schools, according my experience and the experience of colleagues (type of pastoral structure is not recorded by Ofsted (Corfield, 2010)) pupils are grouped in tutor groups by year. A typical secondary school might have six tutor groups in Year 7 with around 30 Year 7 pupils each, six tutor groups in Year 8 with 30 Year 8 pupils each and so on up the school for each year group. The tutors and pastoral care for each year group, or sometimes two year groups or a whole key stage in smaller schools, are overseen by one member of staff, traditionally called a head of year but terms such as head of learning or progress manager are also used now. In my research I have chosen to call this *Horizontal Tutoring* (HT), in contrast to *Vertical Tutoring* (VT). In this thesis I will refer to Vertical Tutor Groups as VTGs and Horizontal Tutor Groups as HTGs.

In a minority of schools (around 15% according to (according to my own exploration of the details found on school websites and my conversation with Ed Fitzpatrick the the head teacher of a vertically tutored school who said he also found about '500' when he and colleagues at the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust looked at VT) each tutor group contains a mixture of a few pupils from each year group, for example three Year 7s, three Year 8s, three Year 9s and so on. These tutor groups are generally organised into 'houses' or schools within the school under a senior or middle ranking member of staff known as a house leader or something similar. For the last forty years this has commonly been called *Vertical Tutoring (Barnard, 2010; Haigh, 1975; Marland, 1980).*

1.6 Research aims

As an assistant head teacher with responsibility for pastoral care and behaviour management at my school, I was excited by the possibility that improvements in pupil prosociality might be 'built in' to the structure of a school by changing tutor group composition from single to mixed year group. I liked the idea that VT

might actually make young people happier and more mature as well as nicer to each other, in contrast to the usual exhortations in assembly and cumbersome systems of rules, rewards and sanctions with which schools traditionally tried to modify student's' behaviour. I also wondered if a structural change might also be inherently fairer, cheaper, more consistent and more durable, because it would apply to all pupils all the time, rather than the costly interventions into the lives of a few 'problem' students or the temporary initiatives, crackdowns and anti-bullying weeks.

However, as an educational researcher who had been trained not to leap to conclusions and an experienced teacher who had seen many fads come and go with little impact, I wanted to know whether there was any research to support the anecdotal evidence from my colleague. Unfortunately, the initial exploration of the literature that I conducted as part of the preparation for my first thesis proposal revealed that there was very little academic research into VT, and certainly nothing to prove that it was better for promoting prosocial behaviour than horizontal tutoring.

The main aim, therefore, of my first thesis proposal was to investigate VT to find out for myself whether VT generally benefitted students' prosocial behaviour rather than just my colleague's daughter, and if so, in what ways. This aim led to the following questions:

1. Did the system of vertical tutoring have a positive effect on pupils' prosocial behavior at my colleague's daughter's school in general, or was she or her tutor group an exception?

2. Was there any evidence that it had a similar positive effect at other schools, or was my colleague's daughter's school an exception?

3. If it did generally have a positive impact, why? What was it about tutor groups with a mixture of year groups rather than just one? Were there any theories that might explain it?

4. What were the disadvantages or costs of vertical tutoring?

5. If there were advantages to vertical tutoring, how could they be maximized and the disadvantages minimized?

However, before I embarked on my own fieldwork, I needed to review the literature more thoroughly in order to find out anything about or related to Vertical Tutoring, and the promotion of prosocial behaviour in young people.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

I had two aims in the reading I did before I designed my research. The first was to find a theoretical framework within which to understand the complex phenomenon of the development of prosocial behaviour in children and adolescents. Initially I read very broadly, within the fields of social psychology and, to a less extent, evolutionary psychology, because both contained a number of interesting theories which appeared to be relevant. Later I narrowed my focus to cognitive theory because this appeared to be the most relevant, for reasons which are explained below in section 2.3.

The second was to explore the existing literature about Vertical Tutoring, to see what had been done before, what was already known about any connection to prosocial behaviour and where my own research should go. Aswell as references in academic and professional books and journals, I also found a very rich source of personal accounts in online discussion forums. These provided a useful insight into the phenomenon and helped me focus my enquiry, so I have included them here.

2.2 Theories about the development of prosocial behaviour in individuals and why a cognitive approach was used

The subject of prosocial behaviour has been approached on a variety of levels. At the microscopic level evolutionary psychologists offer a compelling explanation for the evolution of behaviour they term ‘reciprocal altruism’, in which individuals who are genetically predisposed to help each other because they need help in return are more likely to survive and reproduce (Buss, 2004; Cartwright, 2008; Harris, 1999b; Hogg and Vaughan, 2008; Pinker, 2002). However, this theory does not adequately explain the variation in different types of prosocial behaviour (see Chapter 1) or why they develop within the

individual's lifespan. Furthermore, this theory offers little to schools, which cannot influence their students' genes.

At the macroscopic level prosocial behaviour has been studied in terms of group dynamics and social environment (Battle and Wentzel, 2001; Best *et al*, 1995b; Denzine, 2008; Eisenberg, 1982a; Eisenberg, 1982b; Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990; Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011; Hogg and Vaughan, 2008; McGuinness, 1989; Moore and Underwood, 1982; Sherif and Sherif, 1965; Staub, 1975; Tajfel and Billig, 1974). This was attractive to a researcher interested in the way prosocial behaviour might be promoted simply by restructuring tutor groups from single to mixed-age. However, when I did my initial study of VT at Schools A and B (see Chapter 3) I found that vertical tutor groups which were rarely occupied in structured activities showed few signs of prosocial behaviour or attitudes whereas ones which were showed more than I had seen in my professional experience of HT. If the level at which schools can most promote prosocial behaviour is the level at which their students do activities, then the promotion of prosocial behaviour is in large part an attempt to influence young people to choose to do things which benefit others rather than things that do not. Apart from having options to choose between, which a school and/or teacher can affect through the design of activities and the classroom environment, making choices requires a number of cognitive processes, including the perception and interpretation of other's needs and feelings, and the formulation and execution of a plan of action (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990, p. 108). I therefore decided to approach prosocial behaviour from the mesoscopic level and look at cognitive theories about the development of prosocial behaviour in children and young people as a framework for understanding how it could be promoted in Vertical Tutor Groups.

Since Piaget's first studies of the development of moral reasoning, many cognitive theorists have tended to describe the development of prosocial behaviour in terms of progress through stages (Eisenberg, Fabes and Spinrad, 2006; Hogg and Vaughan, 2008; Siegler, DeLoache and Eisenberg, 2003). This is helpful because it draws out key characteristics of behaviour which

appear to be the result of cognitive processes and places them in a coherent sequence (Siegler, DeLoache and Eisenberg, 2003).

However, all these stage-based theories assume that these stages are distinct, identifiable, sequential and universal, but in practice this does not always appear to be so (Siegler, DeLoache and Eisenberg, 2003). Furthermore, a lack of longitudinal studies, difficulties in isolating causation in natural settings and the inherent limitations of experimental designs mean that most research finds correlation rather than causation (Eisenberg, Fabes and Spinrad, 2006). In my view, this makes stage-based, cognitive approaches to understanding the development of prosocial behaviour a useful framework for conceptualising possible approaches to promoting that behaviour, especially in a school environment which is familiar with trying to help young people develop through a series of stages. However, given that my research cannot be longditudinal and will take place in mixed-age groups, these assumptions and limitations must be born in mind.

2.3 Cognitive theories of prosocial development and the influence of age

Some research into cognitive development and prosocial behaviour has found that both the quality and quantity of prosocial behaviour tends to develop through childhood and adolescence, and on into adulthood, from 'compliance' in very young children – doing something good to avoid punishment or gain a concrete reward, to 'Altruistic Behaviour' in adulthood – doing something good because it is right in principle (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, pp. 201-202). Therefore the more cognitively developed an individual is the more likely they are to put themselves in another's shoes and reason that helping them is just the right thing to do (Eisenberg, 1982b; Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990). An individual's progress along this cognitive path is influenced by a number of factors, including modeling and induction by others in their social environment (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982). If this is correct then it has significant implications for the development of prosocial behaviour in VTGs, where presumably less cognitively developed early adolescents *may* be exposed to the modeling and

induction of prosocial behaviour by presumably more cognitively developed older adolescents.

2.3.1 Social influences

Whilst prosocial behaviour appears to increase as a person progresses through childhood and adolescence, and volunteering and community service tend to first appear in early adolescence, the extent to which this occurs has been found to depend not only on certain aspects of cognitive development but also the influence of parents and peers (Eisenberg and Morris, 2004; Yates and Youniss, 1997). Eisenberg has reviewed a number of studies which suggest that socialisation experiences, such as group activities in school and the presence of prosocial role models, help to advance the development of perspective-taking, moral reasoning and prosocial behaviour (Eisenberg and Morris, 2004; Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990). Given that, during adolescence the influence of parents declines and the influence of peers increases (Bainbridge, 2009), surrounding an adolescent with prosocial peers may be very important to their prosocial development. Indeed it has been found that adolescents who have prosocial role models and/or friends have a tendency to act more prosocially (Steinberg, 2004). Finally, Heynemann claims that there is an association between the provision of high quality education in a positive classroom climate and an individual's tendency towards good citizenship and law abiding behaviour (Heynemann, 2003). If this is true then it suggests to me that, to some extent, the character of a society's education system and the influence of the classroom as a social group supports the development of prosocial behaviour. However, I have some reservations that, if the students who have the highest quality education (leaving aside the debate about what we mean by a high quality education) tend to be ones from the most advantaged social groups, then their apparent good citizenship may be more due to this.

2.3.2 Gender influences

Research based on self-report questionnaires has found that girls and women have a much stronger tendency to feel more empathy and guilt than boys and men, and that in certain situations they are more helpful (Bierhoff, 2005; Eisenberg, Fabes and Spinrad, 2006). This difference is visible even at a very

early age and research seems to support the stereotype that females are more cogniscant of other people's feelings than males and are more likely to feel an obligation to alleviate another's emotional distress. On the other hand, numerous studies have found that male bystanders are more likely to intervene in unexpected emergencies, particularly if physical action and risk are involved (Bierhoff, 2005).

These differences have also been attributed to socialisation and role models, especially the differences in roles that tend to be given to and taken by the sexes, with men predominating in both the formal emergency roles (for example firemen and policemen) and taking action as bystanders in emergency situations, and women predominating in roles associated with nurture (such as nursing and primary school teaching) and being found to be more helpful in non-emergency, especially social, situations (Bierhoff, 2005). Studies also indicate a degree of benevolent sexism, with men being more likely to help women than other men, whilst women are equally likely to help men and women (Bierhoff, 2005; Glick and Fiske, 1996; Steblay, 1987). It must also be noted that there is even a degree of sexism in the study of prosocial behaviour, with more studies of helping in short-term encounters, where men tend to be more helpful, than of helping in longer-term situations, where women tend to be more prosocial (Bierhoff, 2005).

Socialisation seems to affect not only what individuals of either sex do in terms of their prosocial behaviour in different situations but also the way they feel and the way they report what they feel. Males are expected to be more aggressive, more aggressive behaviour is tolerated from them and they may repress feelings of guilt (Bierhoff, 2005; Eagly, 1987). In some cases this may actually negatively affect their development of empathy and moral reasoning, whilst in others it may just influence their responses to questionnaires about these aspects of their lives. Meanwhile, society and parents have higher expectations of girls' moral behaviour and girls' feel may feel more pressure to internalise prosocial norms and maintain social harmony (Bierhoff, 2005). Again, in some cases this may actually accelerate their development of empathy and moral reasoning but in others it may lead them to express views which they think are

socially approved, rather than ones they actually hold. Interestingly, this may lead to a degree of research sexism in the opposite direction, with studies of empathy that rely on non-verbal indicators of empathy and guilt finding no difference between the sexes, while ones which rely on self-report find a huge difference (Bierhoff, 2005).

The issue of gender and socialisation is important for my study given that, for young people, schools are a major source of socialisation experiences, with a complex range of influences, opportunities and challenges. It would be interesting to see whether there was any clear difference in prosocial behaviour by boys and girls because this might suggest something about whether activities in VTGs reinforced or reduced the differences in male/female prosocial behaviour which have been found by other researchers. Furthermore, the disparity between data from self-report questionnaires and observation argues strongly for a mixed method approach to researching the phenomenon, whilst the disparity between male and female representation in different types of situation argues for exploring as wide a variety of prosocial behaviours as possible.

2.3.3 Cultural influences

The most studied cultural difference in prosocial behaviour has been in rurual versus urban environments. Although research has found that levels of helping are not affected by whether a person is *from* a rural or urban community, there is a consensus is that people *in* rural areas are more helpful than those *in* urban ones, for all types of prosocial behaviour, for two complementary reasons (Bierhoff, 2005). Firstly, Milgram's *information overload hypothesis* claims that individuals in cities are so overwhelmed by the number of people and events that they screen nearly everything out and so are less likely to act prosocially (Milgram, 1970). Secondly, Latane and Darley concluded that large groups led to a diffusion of responsibility, with individuals feeling less personal obligation to take action if there are many other people around who could also do so (Darley and Latane, 1968).

However, the picture is complicated by how the researchers classify ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ – particularly whether they measure it by population size or population density (Bierhoff, 2005). A similar dilemma might be encountered when trying to classify a school: in terms of population size, even the largest English secondary school would be classified as a small community by the author of one very large, cross-cultural meta-analysis (Steblay, 1987). Indeed, like the inhabitants of a village, schoolchildren encounter the same limited number of faces every day and, even if they only know a few well, they are likely to recognise many others and know that they will see and be seen by these people again and again. However, when Levine et al studied small, medium and large cities in four parts of the USA, they found that population density was more significant, with lower density leading to higher levels of prosocial behaviour (Levine *et al*, 1994). In terms of population density, comprehensive school corridors and classrooms feel more to me like a busy city shopping mall than a quiet village and I imagine that the number of different subjects a student has to cope with might easily lead many students to feel overloaded by information. Likewise the presence of 20-30 other students in any classroom, plus the number of adults around, might lead to a sense of responsibility being diffused.

According to a summary of existing research, the influence of socio-economic status and socio-economic environment as isolated variables is not clear and appears to be tied to other factors, particularly rural versus urban environments (Bierhoff, 2005). However, one study by Levine et al found that higher cost of living tended to be correlated with lower levels of prosocial behaviour (Levine *et al*, 1994).There is also some evidence to support a *similarity hypothesis*, which predicts that people are more likely to help others who appear to be of a similar social class (Bierhoff, 2005). Of greater significance however appears to be national culture, with very large differences in prosocial behaviour found in different cities around the world (Bierhoff, 2005). For instance, one study found that Brazilian teenagers had lower scores on a test of moral reasoning than their American peers (Carlo *et al*, 1996). This and similar studies suggest that cultural norms have a significant affect on moral reasoning and therefore prosocial behaviour (Bierhoff, 2005). This leads to wonder whether activities in

a VTG can help to create a culture which encourages prosocial behaviour, but at the same time I fear that it may be very hard to disentangle the local social, economic and cultural environment of nation, town and family, from the micro cultures of school and classroom.

2.4 Bar-Tal and Raviv's six phase model of the development of helping behaviour

Like many cognitive theorists in the field of prosocial behaviour, Bar-Tal and Raviv have developed a model based on stages through which the nature and motivation of an individual's helping behaviour progresses (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990, pp. 116-125). Theirs divides the development of helping behaviour into the six phases summarised below:

'Phase 1: Compliance – Concrete and defined reinforcement'. Children help others because they have been told to do so and either offered a tangible reward for doing so, or threatened with a tangible sanction for not doing so. Cognitively, children do not perceive the feelings of the recipient of their help, only their own desire to acquire the reward or avoid the punishment.

'Phase 2: Compliance'. In this phase, children are cognitively aware of others' thoughts and feelings and recognise the authority of figures who have higher status than them. They obey authority figures' instructions to help because they understand that doing so will bring their approval, whilst not doing so risks disapproval.

'Phase 3: Internal initiative - Concrete reward. Children are not only aware of the thoughts and feelings of others but percieve their needs and can plan and execute helping behaviour on their own initiative. However, the motivation is still the acquisition of a tangible reward.

'Phase 4: Normative behaviour'. Children perceive the behavioural norms of their social context, understand that they are expected to conform and desire the social approval that conformity brings (or the disapproval that

non-conformity brings).

'Phase 5: Generalised reciprocity'. Individuals perceive a general social contract whereby people help others on the understanding that, when they themselves need help, someone will help them. Individuals internalise these norms, and act prosocially because they want to uphold the social system of reciprocity, rather than because of any expected sanctions or rewards, approval or disapproval. I infer from Bar-Tal and Raviv's description that, in essence, children at this level want to be part of a world where people help others in need, although this may partly be for the selfish reason that one day they may be the in need themselves.

'Phase 6: Altruistic behaviour'. Individuals help others only because they want to make the recipient feel better. Cognitively they can evaluate another's needs, role-take (in this sense, put themselves in the other's shoes) and feel sympathetic distress at another's plight. They may feel satisfaction or increased self-esteem at alleviating another's distress but their action does not depend on the expectation of any external reward or sanction.

(Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, pp. 201-202)

There are limitations with this model. Firstly, it says nothing about gender, class or ethnicity, for which some evidence shows variation in prosocial development. They do find a relationship with age, which is very interesting for my research into mixed-age groups, but reference to this is not explicitly defined in the six phases model and they do not say why, although it may be because the influence of age is not predictable enough.

Secondly, the way the phases are described suggests they do not overlap. For instance, it would appear that according to their theory, an individual's helping behaviour cannot meet the description of Phase 6 if he or she is affected by the slightest concern for social approval or disapproval, because Bar-Tal and Raviv say that Phase 6 has 'no motive other than to benefit another person' (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 202). This is problematic because Bar-Tal's research was

based on children's self-reports about their motivations for helping in situations set up by the researchers and it is surely possible that, whilst a cognitively developed individual may help largely out of empathy for another, the desire to maintain a general social contract of reciprocity (Phase 5) and a natural desire for social approval (Phase 4) may still be significant motivations. Futhermore, Eisenberg has pointed out that although Bar-Tal and Raviv present their six phases theory as a sequence it is not clear from their data whether a child's development always progresses in that order and the fact that the situations were set up by the researcher who presented choices to them increases the chance they were influenced by the researcher (Eisenberg, 1986).

Eisenberg developed her own somewhat similar stage-based model of what she calls five levels of prosocial reasoning (although she divides Level 4 into 4a and 4b, so in fact there are six) which does explicitly associate age ranges with stages of prosocial reasoning development (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990). For example, Level 1: Hedonistic, self-focused is the dominant mode for preschool and younger primary age children, whilst Level 5: *Strongly internalised stage* is only attained by a small minority of secondary school students and no primary.

This association of prosocial reasoning stage with school age is seductive to a researcher focused on mixed-age tutor groups because it would be interesting to compare students' levels of development and look for evidence of the more advanced older students functioning as models for the less advanced younger ones. However, I have several reservations about using Eisenberg's model. Firstly, the research she based it on involved students of different ages reading moral-dilemma stories and asking them what they think the protagonist should do. Clearly, what a young person says a fictional character should do and what they themselves actually choose to do in a real-life situation are not the same things. Secondly, her descriptions of different levels are not only broader and more detailed but they overlap significantly. For instance, empathic responses to another's distress can be found in Levels 4a to 5 and it is harder to distinguish between an individual who is primarily motivated by their concern for others and one motivated by the ultimately self-centred desire to remain part of the general social contract of reciprocity which benefits them.

Although Eisenberg's stages appear to give a very detailed picture of the prosocial behaviour development she found and the ambiguities in it may reflect the realities of cognitive development, Bar-Tal and Raviv acknowledge that 'other researchers may add to or subtract from' their six phases (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 209) and this gives the researcher some flexibility in developing their own theory from new data.

Another advantage of Bar-Tal and Raviv's research to a teacher-researcher trying to produce something to inform professional practice is that Bar-Tal and Raviv go on to identify five techniques which they claim to be effective in promoting helping behaviour:

1. *'Reinforcement'*: A system which rewards the performance of prosocial actions and punishes non-performance is claimed to help children develop self-regulation. The consequences may be tangible, for example getting a sweet for helping, or intangible, such as praise.

2. *'Modeling'*: If prosocial behaviour is modeled by others, it is claimed that children who observe them will learn what it is appropriate to do and how to do it.

3. *'Induction'*: The reasons for acting in a prosocial way are explained to the child. It is claimed that this not only helps establish the value of prosocial behaviour, but develops the child's own powers of reasoning in these situations.

4. *'Role-playing'*: a child is instructed to act the part of helper or helpee in different situations. It is claimed that this teaches the indivual to take others' perspectives and, through the vicarious experience of the emotions connected to others' perspecitves and experiences, develops their ability to empathise.

5. *'Use of story contents'*: narrative material, include literature, film and

> speech, which describes situations from the perspective of both the helper and helpee, is also claimed to help the child perspective-take, empathise and reason what to do in different situations.
>
> (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, pp. 209-210)

It would seem from Bar-Tal and Raviv's presentation of these techniques that they see them as discrete methods, but as a practising teacher I would suggest that there is a degree of overlap, for example induction may be done through role-play or the use of story contents.

Bar-Tal and Raviv say that there is no empirical evidence for which techniques should be used at which phase and so do not develop their model for prosocial cognitive development into a theory for how to help the individual progress from one phase to another (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982). However, they do offer some speculations and these have informed my own research and the development of my own theory about an additional technique (see Chapters 5 and 6).

According to Bar-Tal and Raviv, children at *Phase 1: Compliance – concrete reinforcement* rarely initiate helping behaviour themselves and mainly respond to *Reinforcement* of the most tangible nature (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 210). Whilst they admit that it is unclear from research to what extent *Modeling* and *Induction* are effective at this stage (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 210), their description of children's cognitive abilities implies that these techniques are unlikely to work. However, Eisenberg cites some evidence that even 1 year olds' behaviour can be influenced more by 'emotionally charged explanations' of the effects of their anti-social behaviour than by 'unexplained verbal prohibitions' (Eisenberg, 1992, p. 96). This could mean that the learning of empathy begins earlier than Bar-Tal and Raviv's phases suggest that these techniques should be used from the earliest years of a child's life.

Although Bar-Tal and Raviv do not say how children move from this first phase to *Phase 2: Compliance*, when *Reinforcement* of a less tangible, more social nature becomes effective, they do say that at this stage children become more responsive to *Modeling* and *Induction*. Why children should just 'become' more

responsive to these is not explained but, if Bar-Tal and Raviv are right, then based on the research of Eisenberg and others it is due to to age-related cognitive maturity, with pre and reception/year 1 school children gradually becoming more aware of the needs and perspectives of others (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990, pp. 125-127). The extent to which this growing awareness is due to children's brains physically developing and the extent to which is because they are exposed to the complex social environment of school is probably unknowable, but a strength of Bar-Tal and Raviv's model, like other cognitive-development models (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990) is that it allows for the influence of both.

Likewise Bar-Tal and Raviv do not ascribe children's movement into *Phase 3: Internal initiative – concrete reward* to the increased use of *Modeling* and *Induction* when they are in Phase 2, but they do say that Phase 3 children are cognitively able to predict the consequences of their actions, choose between alternatives, take the perspective of people in need and understand the significance of others' intentions (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, pp. 210-211). However, according to Bar-Tal and Raviv, Phase 3 children still often help for more egocentric reasons, such as the acquisition of rewards, so it is beneficial to use social *Reinforcement* strategies (such as social approval) *Induction*, *Role-playing* and *Use of story contents* to embed social norms and develop their ability to empathise (ibis.).

Although Bar-Tal and Raviv do not say so explicitly, the embedding of social norms, matches the authors' description of *Phase 4: Normative behaviour*, in which children understand and conform with social norms (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 202). Bar-Tal and Raviv say that during this Phase 4, children should be 'stimulated to perform helping acts without expecting social rewards', which seems to me like preparation for *Phase 5: Generalised reciprocity*, in which children help because they understand the social contract of generalised reciprocity and they have internalised the need to maintain it, not because they expect reward or sanction, tangible or otherwise (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, pp. 202-211). For this reason, *Role-playing* and *Use of story contents* are claimed to be important because they are said to indirectly stimulate helping without the

expectation of reward (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 211). Bar-Tal and Raviv say that *Induction* and *Reinforcement* 'may become less effective, since they might be perceived as pressure, extortion or manipulation' (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 211). This resonates with an opinion I have often heard from colleagues that secondary school children, especially older ones, react against adult lectures about prosocial behaviour and see the promise of rewards like stickers and badges as insultingly childish. My own professional experience suggests to me that some do and some do not, and that Bar-Tal and Raviv are right to carefully qualify their statement with the words 'may' and 'might'.

What Bar-Tal and Raviv say 'can' effectively stimulate more altruistic and less egocentric helping behaviour in the fourth phase are 'moral models' (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 211). However, significantly for my research, they do not elaborate on who these moral models might be. If they are right that children in the fourth phase can perceive adult attempts at *Induction* as manipulative, then perhaps these moral models are peers or older children/adolescents, especially given that during adolescence the influence of parents declines and the influence of peers increases (Bainbridge, 2009). The presence in a Vertical Tutor Group of (hopefully) more cognitively mature older students who could model prosocial behaviour may therefore, according to Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory and their discussion of its implications, have a strong influence on the quality of younger students' prosocial behaviour and that is something that I would analyse my data for.

Once children have moved into *Phase 5: Generalised reciprocity*, Bar-Tal and Raviv say that 'Only indirect techniques such as role playing, identification with moral models or story content' can help a someone progress to Phase 6 and become truly altruistic, and the use of reward-based reinforcement is actually 'detrimental' (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 211). They no longer use the words 'child' or 'children' at this point, as if young people are unlikely to be able to go beyond Phase 5 (ibis.). Indeed, they assert that most people never reach Phase 6. Unfortunately, these are only assertions and the authors offer no evidence to support such definite claims. Nevertheless, their model of prosocial cognitive development and how it can be stimulated could provide a useful framework for

examining the promotion of prosocial behaviour through activities in VTGs and in fact, despite the sometimes confusing mixture of qualified and unqualified statements, that is all the authors claim for their model.

2.5 A review of the literature about Vertical Tutoring

Only one book and only a few articles have been written about VT, although there are a few more references to it in books about tutoring. However, they provide some useful insights into its aims, practice and possible effects.

2.5.1 Early references to Vertical Tutoring and prosocial benefits

Mixed age classrooms of one sort or another have been around from the beginning of mass education, especially when communities were served by lone teachers in one room schools and sometimes when schools (mainly primary) have done so out of pedagogical choice (Little, 2006). The earliest references I have found to Vertical Tutoring (VT) and Vertical Tutor Groups (VTGs) are from 1975. Blackburn refers to it as if it is an established system that a teacher may well encounter, implying that it was neither new nor unusual then (Blackburn, 1975). With regard to prosocial behaviour, he describes the ease and effectiveness with which older students can help younger ones (Blackburn, 1975). Further evidence that VT had a substantial track record by 1975 comes from Haigh, who claims that VT is more effective at developing 'ideals of service' and 'co-operation between children of different age groups' (Haigh, 1975, pp. 115-116). However, Haigh also admits that ‘there is as far as I know no clearly researched demonstration that one sort of school organization is educationally or socially more effective than another, and such are the other variables involved in the differences between school and school, that proper investigation of the matter would be difficult if not impossible.' (Haigh, 1975, p. 118). This not only suggests the long history of VT, but also points out a difficulty for educational researchers which has not been resolved, that of evaluating the effectiveness of one system against another when all other things can never be equal. Meanwhile, in his contribution to a 1980 book on pastoral care, Michael Marland lists the advantages and disadvantages of VT, claiming that ‘Older pupils can sometimes give help and advice, and offer patterns of behaviour to emulate’ but that it is ‘Harder to find a group activity to

occupy the whole group' (Marland, 1980, pp. 55-56). This suggests that there may be a limited number of activities which can meet the needs of different ages but that the ones which do may create opportunities for promoting prosocial behaviour.

One possible origin of VT is the English school 'house' system, in which students are divided into a number of mixed age 'houses'. This has its roots in English public schools and according to Wardle, exists purely for the purposes of intra-school sport and as a reward system (Wardle, 1976). Wardle takes an extremely negative view of this, claiming that public schools created the house system as a means of turning boys' existing propensity for tribal loyalty towards the schools' own ends, channeling it into things over which the school had some control, like rugby, rather than rebellion (Wardle, 1976). He goes on to claim that they succeeded in this but that it was by indulging the boys' antisocial values, rather than nurturing something more positive, and led to bullying and exploitative hierarchical practices such as fagging. However, an alternative view might be that the need to belong to a group and the tendencies to cooperate with one's own group and to compete against other groups can be shaped into something positive by the norms that govern the cooperation and competition (Cartwright, 2008; Pinker, 2002; Ridley, 2004). The questions this raises for me is which activities in VTGs might help to channel individual and group behavioural tendencies in a more prosocial direction and whether the group members are more or less prosocial towards outsiders.

2.5.2 Practioner publications about VT: Barnard, Rose/Pelleschi & Kent/Kay

Despite its apparently long history in schools, relatively little has been written about VT in professional publications. A lot of what has been written is by school leaders who have successfully introduced it to their own schools and who have then written about this experience, either in print or online. Although these are retrospective accounts which have not followed the rigours of a research design and which may be biased by the writers' professional investment in VT, they are still a valuable source of opinion on the topic.

a. Barnard and the philosophy of Vertical Tutoring

Peter Barnard, a 'headteacher/tutor in two mature vertically tutored schools' (Barnard, 2010, p. 105) and a consultant on the introduction of VT at a number of others, claims that VT 'stabilises' schools as places where pupils can learn (Barnard, 2010, p. 22). He believes that the key to this is learning relationships and that 'Reciprocity and attachment underpin and drive many of the pre-conditions of western learning relationships' (Barnard, 2010, p. 21). As discussed above, the concept of *reciprocity* is highly significant to Bar-Tal and Raviv's theories about prosocial behaviour (see 2.X). Referring to the work of Pinker (Pinker, 2002), Haidt and Joseph (Haidt and Joseph, 2007) and McRae (McRae, 1996), Barnard says that each child arrives at school already a member of a number of in-groups, for example family and friends, and that these strongly influence the child's moral mind (Barnard, 2010). The difficulty for schools is that not all of these influences will be positive but 'the need for group membership…prevents consideration of other valid views' (Barnard, 2010, p. 26). Barnard claims that VT uses this 'in-group loyalty gene…to create its own powerfully tutor-based, loyalty groups' (Barnard, 2010, p. 27). This focus on in-group loyalty is reminiscent of Wardle's explanation of the origins of the house system in public schools (Wardle, 1976) but Barnard sees it as something positive rather than negative, asserting that these 'mixed-age loyalty groups…are high in moral values such as reciprocity, empathy, fairness, support' (Barnard, 2010, p. 29).

Barnard does not explain why the loyalty groups in VTGs are higher in positive values but one of his suggestions about how to operate VT successfully resonates with what Bar-Tal and Raviv say in their five techniques for promoting helping behaviour (see 2.4). He states that all pupils should receive mentoring training at some point in their school careers (he recommends Year 10) and that some should receive additional training in assisting others with their learning, such as reading schemes. This assertion is supported by what Bar-Tal and Raviv, as well as Eisenberg say about the value of induction and role-playing and modeling in promoting prosocial behaviour by children and adults (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990). However, Barnard

does not say how this would make students more prosocial in unstructured situations where help was required outside the peer-mentoring relationship.

Although what Barnard says suggests that VTGs are intrinsically more prosocial because of the range of leadership and mentoring roles available to pupils and states that horizontal structures create a 'year-based loyalty system that is too often anti-school and anti-learning' (Barnard, 2010, p. 28) he does not explicitly say why pupils in year-based tutor groups cannot take on these prosocial roles or much about what these roles (apart from peer-mentoring) consist of. Barnard says that VTGs 'represent the idea of a village community or extended family' (Barnard, 2010, p. 29) and that older and younger pupils can be mixed to role model and support learning. Therefore the reader can infer that he believes VT works because of a presumed natural seniority of older pupils, a presumed predisposition of older children to look after younger ones and a presumed natural predisposition of younger ones to look up to older ones as. However, he does not support these presumptions with reference to research evidence and according to Ofsted there are HT schools in challenging circumstances where pupils do take on these roles and behave in a generally prosocial way (Ofsted, 2001). In addition, although he says that 'the future will be entirely vertical for the 'star' school innovators' (Barnard, 2010, p. 83) he does not explain why the positive effect of one vertical tutorial a day is not undone by the rest of the day spent in year-based classes (not to mention break and lunch).

One point Barnard makes which suggests to me that VT can be a suitable vehicle for Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory for promoting helping behaviour (see 2.X) is that in a VTG, every pupil will have the opportunity to take on a responsible role (Barnard, 2010). Although frustratingly, Barnard does not spell it out, there is a logical reason for this: everyone, except the pupils from the youngest year group, will have educational experiences that their younger peers do not have. Regardless of ability a Year 8 has been through aspects of school life that a Year 7 has not, and the least able Year 11 will still know more about being in the final year of compulsory schooling than the most able Year 10. In an age balanced VTG it is possible that every tutee could be responsible for mentoring a fellow tutee in the year below (and in turn, with the exception of the oldest

year, of being mentored by someone in the year above). In addition, because they remain in their tutor groups as they go up through the school, every pupil will go through each stage, so the Year 9 who was helped in choosing their options by a Year 10 in their tutor group will become a Year 10 who helps the next generation of Year 9s. To do this in a school with horizontal tutoring would require pupils to leave their own tutor group to visit their mentor or mentee which, if everyone was doing it in tutor time, would effectively create de facto vertical groups wherever it was taking place. Of course it is perfectly possible that same year pupils could take on roles for mentoring each other for different things in which they had a strength, but unless ability is completely fairly distributed across the horizontal tutor group it will be hard to find genuine mentoring roles for everyone. I have known pupils who, because of learning difficulties or below average maturity, would have been very difficult to place in a role where they could genuinely help someone else in their year. Furthermore, it is possible that the role of mentor could be socially problematic for higher ability pupils whose age-peers may resent their help because it implies inferiority. A vertical tutor group in which experience mattered more than ability and there was a broader mix of strengths and weaknesses could plausibly make giving everyone a role for a significant part of their school career easier. Barnard also says that older pupils can be 'co-tutors' (Barnard, 2010, p. 91), and this would also resonate with theories about how acting a prosocial role can develop those students' prosociality (see 2.6.1).

In summary, Barnard's book is a manifesto for, and a guide to, establishing Vertical Tutoring his way, rather than academic research, and to be fair it is not presented as such. The explicit details of how and why pupils can do things in VTGs that stabilise schools and so promote prosociality, which they cannot do in HTGs, are left for other researchers to complete and have provided a useful starting point for my own research.

b. Rose and Pelleschi and the impact of VT on a school in special measures

Two writers with experience of VT who did produce an article for a peer-reviewed academic journal are Derek Rose and Alun Pelleschi. In 1997 they

were headteacher and section manager at a Sheffield school which was in special measures, in large part because of serious behaviour problems and the failure of the pastoral system to effectively protect the welfare of the pupils (Rose and Pelleschi, 1998). The school was on a split site and so it was decided to vertically integrate Years 7-9 on one site and Years 10-11 on the other (ibis.). The writers also increased the number of staff involved in pastoral care and, by means of section leaders, senior tutors, tutors and associate tutors reduced the staff to tutee ratio to 1 to 15. This provides an interesting case study and although it is by two people with a personal investment in its being seen as successful, they do give both the positive and negative data from their surveys of pupils, parents and staff. They also say that the poor response rate to their surveys – 54% of pupils, 40% of parents and 58% of staff – meant that their results were not statistically significant (Rose and Pelleschi, 1998).

The results from one of those surveys included 79% of pupils saying that their form got on well and 91% of parents saying that they felt their child was safe and well looked after at the school. Although 'getting on well' does not specifically fit the definition of prosocial behaviour, it does suggest a prosocial climate where helping could be expected to occur. One quote - not based on survey evidence but presumably recorded from a tutor, suggests a link between students' taking on positive roles and being helpful:

> 'older siblings became more positive role models…confidence improved as there was always an older pupil to whom to turn for help, which in turn gave a responsible and valued role to older pupils.'
> (Rose and Pelleschi, 1998, p. 30)

As previously discussed in this chapter, some theorists regard roles and role models as effective in the development of prosocial behaviour (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Eisenberg and Mussen, 1990). However, their surveys also suggest some obstacles to prosocial behaviour and room for improvement in the activities done to help pupils and promote helping behaviour. Only 43% of pupils said they 'liked the new tutor group arrangements' and 12% said 'they felt isolated' (Rose and Pelleschi, 1998, p. 31), which contradicts Barnard's

assertions about creating positive group loyalty (Barnard, 2010).

Overall, this case study could be taken to suggest that the change to VT had some positive impact on prosocial behaviour - perhaps by providing, and giving students the opportunity to play, positive roles. However, the results of the survey are not only limited by the low response rate but cannot be compared to any pre-change survey data. Furthermore, the fact that the mixing of ages was combined with a significant increase in the number of pastoral staff (presumably as well as other efforts to improve the school due to its being placed under special measures) highlight the methodological impossibility of isolating the effect of VT from other possible causes.

c. Kent and Kay's experience of establishing VT in a school

Kent and Kay, a headteacher and deputy, introduced VT to their school 2006 to enable older students to have mentoring roles on a 'daily basis' so that 'the mentoring becomes much more profound and ultimately becomes embedded within the whole structure of school life' (Kent and Kay, 2007). After a year a survey of pupils found that very few wanted to return to a horizontal system (even though most had been opposed to its introduction) and, as well as other benefits like fewer exclusions and reduced bullying, it found that there were more opportunities 'for younger students to be helped by older students and no longer any need for a formally organised peer-mentoring programme because it took place 'in a much more profound way through the vertical groups' (Kent and Kay, 2007). Although the authors do not say whether the evidence for these claims came from the pupil survey, their observations, school data or anecdote, they do receive some support from the school's 2007 Ofsted Inspection:

> 'the benefits of such an arrangement [VT] are being realised. For example, older students mentor and support younger students very effectively, especially in the setting of personal targets and providing a sympathetic ear when they have any problems, so that all gain a clear sense of being part of a family.'
> (Ofsted, 2007, p. 5)

2.5.3 Summary of Practioner publications about VT: Barnard, Rose/Pelleschi & Kent/Kay

There is then some evidence from school leaders who claim to have successfully introduced Vertical Tutoring that being in mixed tutor groups leads to older students taking on roles in which they both help younger students and model positive behaviour. This fits with some of Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory about the five techniques which promote helping behaviour: *reinforcement*, *modeling*, *induction*, *role-playing* and *use of story contents*. Students taking on helpful roles is explicitly mentioned by Barnard, Rose and Plelleschi and Kent and Kay whilst Rose and Pelleschi's reference to 'role-models' implies an element of modeling positive, if not specifically prosocial, behaviour (Barnard, 2010; Kent and Kay, 2007; Rose and Pelleschi, 1998). It is also plausible that the older students role-modeling and mentoring contained elements of reinforcement and induction. However, as well as the fact that none of these accounts was based on methodologically rigorous academic research there is also the fact that they are just a tiny fraction of the schools that have used VT. What is more, although Rose and Pelleschi and Kent and Kay do describe some of the difficulties they faced, they are still telling their own success stories and perhaps making generalisations about that success based on cherry-picked evidence or general feelings about change. Likewise, the official websites of schools that use VT tend to claim the same benefits, and often the information they give is just the original reasons for its adoption rather than comments about its success since (Brentwood County High School, 2011; Denbigh School, 2011; Perryfields High School, 2010; Royds Hall High School, 2011; Sharrnbrook Upper School, 2011; St Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, 2009; Student Leadership Team, 2009). We have little idea what the dissenting voices, few or not, have to say or much detail about problems. It is also fair to assume that any school leader whose introduction of VT was a failure is much less likely to write about it. I therefore looked carefully for dissenting voices and any information about the micro-detail of success and failure.

2.6 Individual voices in online forums

One place where dissenting voices could definitely be found was in online forums and social networking sites. Unfortunately the anonymity that allows people to speak freely also makes it impossible to be certain of their provenance or whether every online identity is a separate person. There were hundreds of references to VT in online forums and these are being added to, so it would be impractical to analyse them all thoroughly enough to precisely state the balance of opinion for and against. However, after a lengthy but not exhaustive search of the internet by googling the key phrase “vertical tutor” I found that the majority of contributors to these sites, whether students, teachers or parents, who claimed to have had personal experience of VT, were positive about it, citing significant benefits to maturity, sense of belonging, peer support, behaviour, reducing bullying and an increased number and range of friends (Bebo, 2009; Club.omlet, 2008; Elevenplusexams, 2008; Elevenplusexams, 2010; Habboxforum, 2008; Horseandhound, 2010; mumsnet, 2008; School History, 2010; Schoolhistory, 2006). These suggest a more prosocial climate and references to peer support strongly imply specifically prosocial behaviour.

In contrast, most teachers, parents and pupils who did not have personal experience of VT but whose school was proposing to adopt it were extremely negative, with pupils being especially concerned about being split from friends. This raises a difficult issue for schools that cherish democratic values and ‘the student voice’, because many school leadership teams who have been convinced of VT’s benefits and wish to introduce it face stiff opposition. This is relevant because several authors have connected the practice of democratic values in school with the development of prosocial behaviour (Barnard, 2010; Colbert, 2000; Eisenberg, 1982b; Forero-Pineda, Escobar-Rodriguez and Molina, 2006).

2.7 Academic research into VT

I found only two studies by academic researchers into the benefits of VT. Their results are ambiguous and sometimes contradictory, but they nevertheless

provide some useful insights into its possible relationship with prosocial behaviour.

2.7.1 Tattersfield

The first of these was by Tattersfield at a comprehensive school in south west England which used VT at their split site, with Years 7-9 in mixed tutor groups at site 1 and Years 10-13 mixed at site 2, until 1983 when they changed to a horizontal system (Tattersfield, 1987). After 4 years of the horizontal tutor groups, 75 Year 12s and 13s, who had 2-3 years experience of the vertical system in their early years at the school, were surveyed about their preferences.

Overall, the sixth formers showed no clear preference for either VT or HT. In fact relatively few plumped for a 'pure' horizontal (17%) or 'pure' vertical system (24%). The majority (59%) went for one of several hybrids of the two, but again with no clear preference for a particular variation. Opinion was neatly divided on whether they thought VT or HT would have helped them settle in better in Year 7, but whilst 25% thought they would have made more friends in Year 7 if they had been in tutor groups of just Year 7s and 23% thought they would have made fewer, 52% thought it would have made no difference. These opinions contradict the most commonly held view expressed by modern pupils online, who almost all emphasise the making of more friends as VT's biggest benefit to them.

Considering these sixth formers views about settling in Year 7 it was therefore slightly surprising to read that 64% thought they would have settled into Year 10 better (which is also when they would have moved to the second site) if they had joined a vertical rather than a horizontal group. Whether or not this is due to their perception of a more prosocially inclusive social environment in the old upper school VTGs is impossible to know. For these sixth formers the move to Year 10 took place at or around the same time as the school's transition to HT, as well as being the start or culmination of their O Level studies. It is possible that the change from vertical to horizontal itself was unsettling, or that the move from one site to another and the stress of exams and coursework affected their

mood. The difficulty of separating the causes and effects of different aspects of a complicated experience is one of the issues that makes evaluating the impact of VT so hard and affected both my research aims and methodology (see Chapter 3).

Where there were significant majorities in favour of one opinion were in questions about community cohesion and participation, which are thought by several writers to affect prosocial behaviour (Astin, Sax and Avalos, 1999; Gaertner *et al*, 1999; Riedel, 2002; Yates and Youniss, 1997). First of all, when asked how well tutor time was used, twice as many (26%) thought it was less well used than thought it was better used (13%), though the majority thought it was the same or did not know (Tattersfield, 1987). The proportions were the same for whether they thought there were more, less or the same opportunities to take responsibility but when asked whether general enthusiasm of the student body for participation in school activities had increased or decreased since the move to HT, 77% said it had decreased (Tattersfield, 1987). This was matched by 77% who said that actual participation had decreased (Tattersfield, 1987). These were the largest majorities for anything in the survey and although only 44% thought communications between students had got worse (with 24% saying they had got better and 30% saying they were the same), I speculate that this 44% might have been the house captains and prefects who were trying to get pupils to participate and who were most sensitive to a decline in the sense of community (Tattersfield, 1987). However there are other possibilities. The first is the inevitable tendency of the older generation to belittle the younger one, especially if it is the older generation which has the responsibility of getting the younger one to turn up to practice. The second is the opposite: perhaps in this case it was the older generation who were losing interest in school activities as a result of growing up. Either way, enthusiasm and participation were elements that warranted particular attention in my research.

2.7.2 Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum

One very recent study which was specifically focused on the impact of VT on

pupils' prosocial behaviour was by Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, who gave a standard pyschological personality test questionnaire to 87 pupils (32 x Year 7 and 58 x Year 9/10s) two months before and then four months after their mixed comprehensive school's transition from a horizontal to a vertical structure (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). They also asked teachers to rate classroom climate before and after (ibid.).

The authors' aim was to measure the pupils' levels of empathy, perspective-taking, social responsibility and prosocial behaviour before and after the transition, and to see if there were any significant links between these four. They did this by asking Likert scale questions such as 'How often do you try to share what you've learned with your classmates' and 'How often do you try to cheer someone up when something has gone wrong', as well as by asking them the extent to which they agreed with statements such as 'my class is like a family' and some open questions (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011, p. 13).

On the whole the results were disappointing for those expecting a rapid transformation. There was no significant change, for better or worse in prosocial behaviour in either gender. Only 26% said they had made new friends and that it was more fun in their vertical tutor group, and only 22% said they had become more confident and that bullying had stopped (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). Even fewer, 13.7%, said they could discuss their problems in their vertical tutor group (ibis.). According to the small sample of staff surveyed, there was not a statistically significantly improvement in classroom climate (ibis.).

The most positive result was a small but statistically significant increase in older boys' levels of perspective-taking (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). In addition, the regression analysis found significant links between a pupil's level of perspective-taking and their levels of social responsibility before and after the transition to VT. It also found significant links between a pupil's levels of empathy and perspective-taking with their levels of prosocial behaviour before and after. This supported the findings of other researchers who also linked these three (ibis.).

Rather confusingly, qualitative data showed 80% of participants felt positive about their new vertical tutor group although they actually reported a decline in the classroom climate (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). This suggests to me that perhaps four months was not long enough for the pupils to have made up their minds. The researchers described pupils' levels of empathy, perspective-taking, social responsibility and prosocial behaviour as relatively high to begin with, so there might have been less room for improvement (ibis.). Interestingly, the school's 2010 Ofsted report, conducted four months after the second questionnaire and after eight months of VT, described behaviour at the school as only satisfactory (Ofsted, 2010). However they did say that it was improving and that the change to VT had played an important role in improving the school's care, guidance and support, which were now good (Ofsted, 2010). Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum felt that perhaps four months was not long enough for the change in social environment to take effect and, based on what some teachers, parents and pupils have said online, I think they may be right because the pupils' resentment at having their social environment changed may not have worn off. The authors speculated that perspective-taking did increase whereas other aspects did not because exposure to the feelings and experiences of older and/or younger peers may affect adolescents' social cognition first, which concurs with some other research (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). It may be that improved social cognition is a necessary pre-cursor to improved social responsibility and prosocial behaviour (if thought precedes action) and that longer exposure is needed before the former affects the latter.

As well as the short exposure to VT, the writers also speculated that results might have been been influenced by the fact that the pre-VT test was done in June, when weather was better while the post-VT test was done in January, when weather was worse and there was still the school year to go (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). They also relied on just one method of data collection, the pupils' and teachers' self-reporting questionnaires, which can be influenced by the respondents' own expectations or the perceived expectations of others (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). This was one of my motivations for using a multi-method approach in my own research. Also absent

is any detailed analysis of what took place in the vertical tutor groups, which was one of my reasons for focusing on the micro-detail of activities in VTGs in my research.

2.8 Prosocial behaviour in research into multigrade education and peer-tutoring

There has been more academic research into what is often called ‘multigrade’ learning, in which pupils, mostly in primary schools, are organised vertically into mixed-age classes. Although this is generally viewed as an inferior model forced on schools by logistical necessity rather than pedagogical choice, vertically grouped classes are common in primary schools around the world with an estimated 30% of the world’s primary school children being taught in this way (Little, 2006). Almost a quarter of English primary school children also do some form of mixed age learning (Little, 2006). In addition there are some apparently successful examples of educational systems specifically designed for it, such as the Escuela Nueva (EN) system that originated in Colombia and there have been times when it has been encouraged in England, for example by the 1967 Plowden Report (Little, 2006).

Of particular relevance to VT is the evidence for the benefits to prosocial behaviour of cross-age peer-tutoring. Colbert describes how the cooperative, cross-age learning environment of Escuela Nueva schools helped to develop ‘tolerance and the skills and attitudes necessary for peace-building’ (Colbert, 2000, p. 20) and Forero-Pineda *et al* cite evaluations that showed ‘the use of Escuela Nueva methodologies has a significant positive impact on the peaceful social interaction of children’ (Forero-Pineda, Escobar-Rodriguez and Molina, 2006, p. 289). Nielsen and Rowley say that in ‘marginal’ communities (he meant the poorest parts of the developing world but this could perhaps apply to deprived areas of England too) multigrade schools provided a supportive 'family atmosphere' (Nielsen and Rowley, 1997, p. 191)

With regard to the activities that can take place in a mixed age classroom and promote prosocial behaviour, one of the most beneficial seems to be peer-

tutoring. Vygotsky famously theorised that children learn in a 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD), in which problems they cannot solve independently they can solve with the support of adults or more able peers (Vygotsky, 1978). He says that two children of the same age and 'actual developmental level' different ZPDs and if the teaching is at a level above a particular child's ZPD, then that child will not be able to learn (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 85-88). Having sometimes struggled to convey concepts which I have understood for so long, this suggests to me that more able peers may sometimes be more likely to teach within the learner's ZPD than an adult teacher. Both academically and socially, slightly older children may provide examples and guidance which younger ones can follow more easily than they can those of adults. As well as any benefits to academic learning, research has found significant benefits to both tutors' and tutees' attitudes to school, meeting new people, awareness of other's needs, social responsibility and enjoyment of helping and being helped (Institute for Effective Education, 2011; Thomas and Shaw, 1992; Topping and Bryce, 2004).

In summary, the research into multigrade classrooms report some of the same prosocial benefits as VT research and anecdote and in my research I decided to pay close attention to any peer-mentoring and peer-teaching activities. However, the primary school context and the focus on activities in academic classes rather than tutor groups means I cannot assume its conclusions automatically apply to secondary school VTGs.

In summary, the small body of extant academic research is inconclusive about the claimed prosocial benefits of VT, lacks micro-detail about what activities take place in vertical tutor groups, causal links between activities and prosocial behaviour and how any benefits can be maximised. Given the claims of VT's proponents and the benefits of prosocial behaviour, this struck me as a serious gap in our professional knowledge and addressing it became the ultimate aim of my research. My aim then was to contribute research which would explore that micro-detail in order to better inform professional judgements about how to maximise the prosocial benefits of VT.

2.9 Conclusion

Although the existing evidence for VT promoting prosocial behaviour is limited, largely inconclusive and often anecdotal, the evidence for the influence of peers, role models, roletaking, social groups (including school-based ones) and activities within those social groups is strong. Theories about the development of prosocial behaviour in adolescents suggest that activities within vertical tutor groups should promote prosocial behaviour. The existing research into VT does not examine the micro-detail of structured activity or unstructured prosocial behaviour within VTGs and so left me with a number of questions, which formed the basis of my research questions in the next chapter. My aim then was to contribute an exploration of that micro-detail about structured activities (teacher designed and initiated) in VTGs and their possible influence on students' own prosocial behaviour (student initiated) in order to better inform the planning of colleagues who seek to maximise the prosocial behaviour of their students in a vertically structured school.

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction – from generalisation to relatability

At the beginning of my research I had a professional interest, the promotion of prosocial behaviour, and some anecdotal evidence from the parent of one pupil at one school that Vertical Tutoring could be beneficial to this. After looking at online forums I believed that the balance of anecdotal evidence suggested that VT did improve prosociality in many cases, but the existing academic literature was more ambiguous about its benefits. So I was left still wanting to know how and to what extent VT could promote prosocial behaviour in schools.

As a professional and as an Education Doctorate student, I wanted to produce research which was not only 'a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the field of study' (Crawford, 2009, p. 93) but of practical benefit to myself and my colleagues, so it was tempting to embark on a grand quest to make absolute generalisations about the effectiveness of VT in promoting prosocial behaviour. However, as I knew from my research training and as numerous writers have pointed out, such certainties rarely exist in educational research (Bassey, 1981; Byrne, 2009; Guba and Lincoln, 2000). Instead I was influenced by Bassey's approach to generalisation, whereby deep, qualitative data from a single case can be analysed to provide *relatability*: conclusions which fellow professionals can then reflect on and adapt to their own context (Bassey, 1981). This seemed the most likely means whereby I could produce something which not only added to the body of knowledge about this field but would help myself and fellow professionals increase prosocial behaviour in our own schools.

3.2 A first attempt

Due to the relative lack of academic research about Vertical Tutoring (see Chapter 2 Literature Review) and my own desire to find out to what extent VT promoted prosocial behaviour, how and why, my first set of research questions were quite broad:

1. What took place in Vertical Tutor Groups?

2. How did pupils of different and similar ages relate to each other and to their tutor?
3. What roles were taken by or assigned to pupils of different ages?
4. How did being in a Vertical Tutor Group influence the pro or antisocial behaviour of tutees?

I decided to gather data in two of the VT schools which had volunteered to participate in my research when I announced my intentions at a meeting for local secondary school pastoral leaders, choosing them because School A had only been doing VT for just under three years and School B had been doing it for seven, so I thought they would provide an interesting comparison by being at different stages of VT development. Because one of these schools, School B, was divided into four colleges I felt it would be interesting to see how the same version of VT (tutor groups of 20-25, ages 11-19, daily half hour tutorial session before lunch) was applied in each college, so I arranged to spend one day a week, for four weeks, observing a single tutor group from each college. The remaining day of each of those four weeks I would spend at School A, observing one pupil from a different tutor group each week through his/her early morning lessons, up to and including their 25 minute tutor time which took place at 10.30. I thought that this might reveal something about the effect on behaviour of being in a mixed year tutor group as compared to a single year subject class. At the end of the four weeks I conducted focus groups with six pupils from each tutor group in School A, interviewed the tutors I had observed and gave a questionnaire to all the pupils in each of the four tutor groups. At School B I interviewed five pupils, one each from Year 7, 9, 10 and 12, gave questionnaires to four tutor groups selected as a representative sample by the Deputy Headteacher and conducted a focus group with four tutors who had volunteered to take part. Although I gathered a very large amount of data I realised with hindsight, and in discussion with my supervisor and colleagues at the Institute of Education, that because my research questions had been too broad, this data collection excercise had not been focused enough achieve my research aim.

However, the experience of doing this fieldwork and the data I gathered taught me a great deal about both VT and the process of researching it. In particular, I learned the following:

1. Many and varied examples of prosocial behaviour occurred spontaneously (i.e. at the initiative of a pupil in response to a need, not explicity directed by an adult) amongst tutees of all ages.
2. Activities organised and directed (at least in the first instance) by tutors seemed to be key to the life of the tutor group and the frequency of spontaneous prosocial behaviour. In the tutor groups where there were many planned activities, tutees and tutors told many stories of tutees helping each other. In tutor groups where there were few planned activities, relatively few examples were reported.
3. The substance of life in different successful tutor groups (ones I would characterise as highly prosocial), varied but was broadly similar. However, the way in which individual tutors organised life in their tutor groups – their style – was more variable and comparisons were useful in understanding what was going on, even if the number of tutor groups was nowehere near enough to make assertions about VT schools generally.
4. Spending one day a week in a tutor group, even for four weeks, was not enough to form a productive working relationship with the tutees, and this may have affected the amount and depth of the data I got from the focus groups.
5. Seeing one pupil in his or her single year subject classes in School A and then in his or her mixed year tutor group suggested that behaviour in the tutor groups was usually calmer, friendlier and more responsive to the tutor. However, because the tutor groups were much smaller and the activities and demands were very different, it is hard to draw any more detailed conclusions from it.
6. When interviewing individual pupils from School A, whom I had not observed in their tutor groups, I had to imagine everything they described to me. Triangulation between self-reports and observation of those pupils

would probably have provided more (though still not completely) reliable data than either method on its own.

7. All the tutors I spoke to were positive about VT and described benefits to prosocial behaviour. However, what they said in School B, where I had seen their own tutor groups in action, was much easier to understand than in School A, where I had not.
8. When informed of what I wished to do, most pupils were quite keen to participate in interviews and focus groups. Those who were not were unembarrassed about declining and substitutes were easily found.

In the absence of much similar research, this experience was invaluable in enabling me to refine my research questions and develop my methods for answering them.

3.3 Final research design

In the light of the data from my first attempt, it seemed clear to me that the most important factor in promoting independent, spontaneous prosocial behaviour by pupils in VTGs were the activities planned, initiated and directed by the tutor, which I decided to term *structured activities*. Although in some cases activities were to an extent planned, initiated and directed by a pupil or pupils, they were usually repetitions or adaptations of activities originally delivered by the tutor and they always took place within a routine, time and place controlled by the tutor. Therefore they were structured. So although the prosocial behaviour I was most interested in was that which occurred spontaneously, at the initiative of a pupil in response to a need they perceived, I decided to call *unstructured prosocial behaviour*, I also wanted to study the structured activities that might promote it. This was because my desire as a professional is to see young people behaving prosocially without having to be explicitly told to, not only because it would make schools happier places but because it indicates development on the part of the young person (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Eisenberg, 1982a; Eisenberg, 1982b; Eisenberg and Morris, 2004).

3.3.1 Final research questions

This focus gave rise to the following research questions:

1. Which structured activities does the data suggest best promote unstructured prosocial behaviour in vertical tutor groups and in what ways?

2. Are there any key features or variables for activities which the data suggest promotes prosocial behaviour including group composition (age, gender, ability, personality), seating arrangements, physical resources, time resources, themes, pupil roles, tutor roles, process, rewards, risks, boundaries?

3. Which kinds of prosocial behaviour does the data suggest may be promoted by which kinds of activities?

3.3.2 Why a case study approach?

Gillham defines a case as 'a unit of human activity embedded in the real world…which can only be studied or understood in context' (Gillham, 2000b, p. 1). The research questions I wanted to answer were about the effects of activities over time on prosocial behaviour in the real world so I felt there was no other option but to study a pre-existing example or 'case' of it in practice. To have gone into a tutor group and tried certain activities with them would have made that world less real by introducing a new adult authority and new ways of doing things. In addition, although I planned to view activities and prosocial behaviour through the lense of Bar-Tal and Raviv's six phase model of the development of helping behaviour and their theory that five techniques could be used to promote progress through those stages, I suspected that activities might be effective for a variety of reasons, perhaps not covered by Bar-Tal and Raviv's list of techniques. Therefore I wanted to use a case study method because this approach is 'inductive', generating theories from the authentic context rather than trying to test them in more controlled conditions, making abductive inferences about possible relationships between activities and

behaviours rather than trying to prove or generalise about causal mechanisms (Byrne, 2009; Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Gerring, 2007; Hammersley and Gomm, 2000; Merriam, 1988). Furthermore, I reasoned that to focus on testing an existing social psychological theory developed from studies of a variety of social situations might risk glossing over the idiosyncracies of the secondary school context and missing important factors which might be unique to it. This would make it less relevant and relatable for my professional audience.

Finally, case studies, by definition, focus on one 'site' (Robson, 2002) in great depth, revealing much more about complex phenomena (Gerring, 2007; Merriam, 1988) than an approach that divides the reseacher's resources between a large number of contexts. Apart from the time spent at one location, another reason they can do this is that they allow for multiple methods to be used (Robson, 2002) and for the researcher to triangulate the data, giving greater internal validity (Merriam, 1988). All these factors meant that a case study would much better fulfil my aim of producing something relatable rather than generalisable; not only would I be able to induce my own theories from the thick description provided by a case study, but other professional readers would be more likely to be able to induce their own.

3.3.3 What kind of case study?

Types of case study are defined according to what constitutes the case, the 'level of the unit of analysis' and the number of cases to be studied (Robson, 2002, pp. 181-183).

According to Merriam, a case is a 'bounded system' and the bounded system the researcher chooses to study depends on what they want to make conclusions about at the end of their research (Merriam, 1988, pp. 44-45). For my research this is slightly complicated. My interest is in improving prosocial behaviour across a whole school, therefore a school seemed to be the most obvious bounded system for me to study as a single case. However, I knew from my first attempt that most of the activities which took place occurred within individual tutor groups, making them very much bounded systems in their own

right.

Another reason for choosing to study tutor groups rather than a whole school was concern for at what level of the case study unit (in this case the school) I would find the phenomena operating. I felt that my research would fall between *holistic*, which Robson says tries to understand the whole institution rather than a sub-unit of it, and a *critical case*, which he says can be used when the researcher has a strong enough theoretical understanding to predict where outcomes will be found (Robson, 2002). I could not say that I had a specific theory which pointed towards studying at the level of the tutor group rather than the whole school, but experience told me that was where the action was.

The last decision to make was whether to study one or a number of tutor groups. If I still wanted to draw conclusions about a whole school then, even if I was not trying to produce quantitative data, I felt I should study a representatively large enough cross section. However, most VT schools I knew had very large numbers of tutor groups, at least thirty, and to gain an in-depth understanding of even a quarter of these would be a huge undertaking, beyond the scope of my 45,000 word thesis. On the other hand, studying only one tutor group seemed risky. What if, for whatever reasons, very few activities occurred during the time I spent with the tutor group, or I failed to establish a productive working relationship with the tutor or tutees? Experience from doing my Institution Focused Study, in which I spent four weeks studying one English class and produced a 25,000 word paper, and from my first attempt at studying Vertical Tutor Groups, in which I spent four weeks spending a day a week with each of four tutor groups, suggested to me that two weeks each with two tutor groups would be both practical and allow sufficient depth of data-collection.

Although Merriam says that interpretations based on data from a number of cases may be more convincing to another reader than those drawn from just one (Merriam, 1988) I did not study two tutor groups to make my research any more generalisable to School A, let alone VT schools generally (and neither do I believe in retrospect that it did). Rather, experience told me that comparing two tutor groups for two weeks each would provide a richer set of data than one

tutor group for four weeks, because in one tutor group many activities would be repeated and because pupils' excitement about being researched, and therefore their enthusiasm for participating, seemed to last about a fortnight.

It is also true that, whilst not significantly increasing generalisability, it is often much easier to understand something when one has something else to compare it to and reflecting on the similarities and differences between two examples is a very effective means of generating ideas and providing starting points for discussions with and between participants, particularly in the final focus group of tutees from both tutor groups.

3.3.4 Methodological limitations

Atlhough, as discussed above, a qualitative, case study approach aiming for relatability rather than generalisation appeared to be the most appropriate way to answer my questions about the phenomenon of activities and prosocial behaviour in VTGs, I had to be aware of some significant methodological limitations.

First was the issue of validity. Maxwell identifies four strands of validity in qualitative research: *descriptive*, *interpetive*, *theoretical* and *evaluative* (Maxwell, 2002). All four were extremely pertinent to my research design of observations, interviews and a focus group to study a particular case. Descriptive validity relates to the factual accuracy of the data recorded by the researcher (Maxwell, 2002). Even before any data is required the accuracy with which the phenomenon can be described may be affected by the presence of the observer, who may informally manipulate what the participants say and do (Yin, 2009). Then there is the problem of accurately describing behaviour using terms. For example, when one of the students I interviewed said 'we all take it as a joke' (see 4.2.3; 'it' was the way students described each other during a game), those are the exact words I wrote down. However, I have to assume that what the student meant by that phrase is the same as what I understand by it and the same as what my readers will understand by it. These inferred meanings may easily be affected by the researcher and the reader's

assumptions and what they want to believe. Leaving aside whether or not the student can be so sure that all his peers took ‘it as a joke’, does he mean they found it funny and enjoyed it or that they did not like it but accepted that no offence was intended? This is problematic even with a phrase commonly used across different ages but much more so if the words used are teenage slang, which can vary greatly between locations and change quickly. Obviously, one advantage of less structured interviews is that the researcher can ask follow up questions to clarify meanings but this would be impractical to do for every thing an interviewee said and impossible during an observation, so some assumptions about meaning have to be made and inaccuracies are inevitable.

Omissions are also inevitable and affect descriptive validity (Hammersley, 2008; Maxwell, 2002). It is impossible for any researcher to record every action, utterance and aspect of context which may be relevant and therefore things will be left out. In my fieldnotes I planned to quickly sketch the layout of each tutor room, indicate where students sat, use arrows to show major movements during the lesson and even noted the weather and any important school events that day, but there must have been many things I did not notice or could not have observed. There may also have been things I left out because they did not fit a subconscious bias. Even so I had much more data than I could ever analyse and had to quickly decide what was significant and what was not, with inevitable consequences for the accuracy of my description.

Related to this problem of accuracy in the recording and description of behaviour is the issue of interpretive validity. Just as my interviewee’s account of how he thinks he and his classmates felt about a game is a construct, so my interpretation of that means and the intentions and opinions I infer from it are constructs (Maxwell, 2002). As a researcher I try to be aware of the feelings and assumptions which might affect the validity of my interpretations, such as my hope to see VT having a positive impact on prosocial behaviour and therefore giving me a ‘good news’ story to tell. I can try to guard against this by actively looking for and analysing disconfirming evidence but I have to assume I have unconscious thoughts and feelings, which must affect my interepretation of the data. However, I cannot expect my participants to do the same before they

answer my questions.

A decision I did consciously make was to understand the phenomenon of prosocial behaviour through a cognitive theoretical framework, in particular Bar-Tal and Raviv's six phase model of the development of helping behaviour and their theory that five techniques. This too is a construct and the degree to which it can claim theoretical validity depends on how appropriate it is for explaining the phenomenon (Gillham, 2000b; Maxwell, 2002). Gillham says that 'Good theories are fertile: they account for a lot of data' (Gillham, 2000a, p. 12) but just because something appears to account for a lot of data does not mean that it does. When one of the tutors in my study told me that a particular activity made her students 'more open-minded' (see p89), there was not only the issue of whether or not my description and interpretation of the data were valid, but whether it was valid to fit this into a theory of cognitive development, rather than any of the other theories constructed to explain prosocial behaviour. The statement, by a teacher, that a student had become more 'open-minded' as a result of an activity seems to fit very plausibly with a theory of cognitive development but, even if she is right about the effect, there could be other reasons why the student appeared to become that way. It is absolutely not proof of a causal link between either the vertical structure of the tutor group or (that activity and an increase in one kind of prosocial behaviour; even is she thinks it is. It is, at best, a plausible explanation which a fellow professional can relate to their own context and use to inform choices which can perhaps never be guided by absolute proofs of cause and effect. Ultimately, in the almost infinitely complex and inter-related real world of social interaction, the choice of theoretical explanation is *abductive*: what the researcher (and their reader) thinks is the best fit (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). This is one of the reasons why I have limited both my research questions and my conclusions to what the data suggests might be the explanation in this case study and what that means for professional practice, rather than looking for or claiming to establish a causal link.

Beyond the methodological challenge of constructing valid descriptions, interpretations and theoretical explanations, lies the question of evaluative

validity. For example, was the students taking amusing descriptions of themselves in a game as a 'joke' (see 4.2.3) a sign of a warm, empathic family relationship or a sign that they were afraid to speak out against certain members of the tutor group or disrupt the tutor's game? Although 'many researchers make no claim to evaluate the things they study' (Maxwell, 2002, p. 55), the nature of the area I am researching requires me to: to reach a conclusion I have to decide whether the students describing each other in an amusing way is part of an example of prosocial behaviour because of what one student says (and I observed) about their response to that, or whether it is actually a sign that they want to antagonise each other which only appears to fail on the surface. As with all the other strands of validity in qualitative research, this one is a question of a series of judgements, starting (in the case of an interview or focus group) with the participant and ending with the reader: based on the evidence, and dependent on its quality, are the interpretations, theories and evaluations plausible (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996)? Any of these may be affected by my or the reader's bias to find what they want to find and I ensured that the 'trees' I used to categorise my qualitative data in Nvivo always included categories for data which disconfirmed what I might hope to find, which was evidence that activities promoted prosocial behaviour.

The second methodological issue is one of utility. Although I have, for the reasons explained at the beginning of this chapter (see 3.1), accepted the need to aim for relatability rather than generalisation in my analysis and conclusions, will a single case study based on two tutor groups be sufficiently useful to my fellow professionals? Hammersley has cast doubt on Geertz's concept of a thick description providing for the explication of meaning, due to the inherent difficulty of selecting between contradictory data from different participants (Hammersley, 2008), which echoes the issues about validity discussed above .

Moreover, the fact that neither a researcher nor a reader can use a single case study to infer frequency in the rest of the population (Yin, 2009) might seriously undermine its relatability in some readers' minds. Therefore it might be argued that a study which aimed for breadth rather than depth might offer more useful information. Certainties about the universal effectiveness of educational

strategies might rarely exist but large studies of the same phenomenon in many locations might at least show that, out of a large sample, in a majority of cases when X was used, Y was observed to occur. Furthermore, even if it is impossible to establish causal links between phenomena as complex as activities and behaviour in secondary schools, a large number of similar correlations in different schools might be more useful to a headteacher about to take a large and possibly controversial decision. I decided that, because I wanted to inform my colleagues about the micro-detail of activities and behaviour, and because this is one of those phenomena that are inextricable from the details of its context (Yin, 2009), that Bassey is right and that this time depth allows for greater relatability (Bassey, 1981). I stand by this judgement but each reader must make their own; in that sense, relatability is in the eye of the relater.

3.3.5 School A and why it was used as a case study

In 2011, when I undertook my fieldwork there, School A was a mixed, 11-19 years community secondary school. Its location included areas of economic and social disadvantage (Ofsted, 2009a), and in 2011 12.1% of its students were eligible for free school meals (Department for Education, 2011). The vast majority of its students were of white British heritage (89.4%), with 1.4% another white heritage, 2.3% Gypsy/Roma origin and 1.6% classified by the 2011 School Census as 'white and black Carribean'; no other ethnic group made up more than 1% of the school population (Department for Education, 2011). Therefore, although it would be a generalisation to say that most students were from a similar background, I did bear the similarity hypothesis in mind (see 2.3.3) and looked for signs that students treated each other any differently on the basis of ethnicity or socio-economic class. However, I found none.

Although School A was mixed, it did not have an equal balance of boys and girls and the proportions of male and female students varied quite widely from cohort to cohort, as can be seen from school census data in the table below:

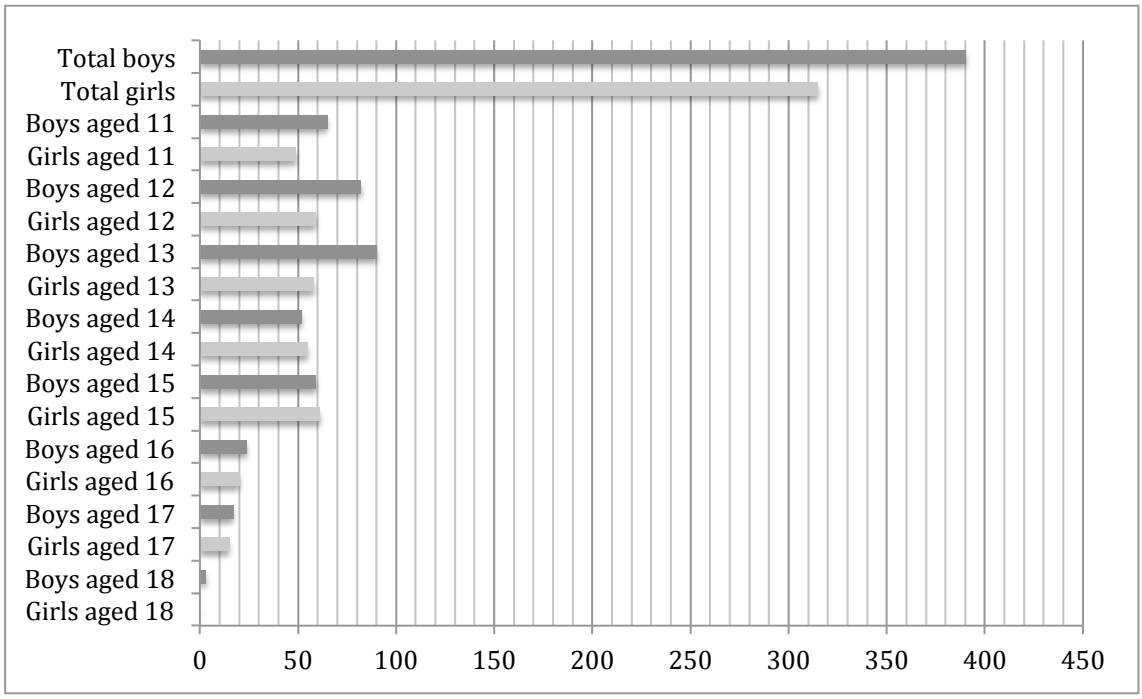

Fig.1: Number of students at Hextable School in 2011, by age and gender (Department for Education, 2011)

Boys significantly outnumbered girls overall but especially at ages 11,12 and 13 (contained in Year Groups 7-9). Although there were slightly more girls at ages 14 and 15 (Year Groups 9-10), numbers of girls dropped off again in the sixth form and there were no girls aged 18. This imbalance was not due to any school policy but demography and the presence nearby of several all girls' schools, may have been factors. This was potentially significant because, as discussed in the literature review (see 2.3.2), other researchers have found gender differences, both in the nature and level of the different sexes' prosocial behaviour and the way their prosocial cognition develops (Bierhoff, 2005; Eisenberg and Morris, 2004; Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011). I did not judge this difference to be a reason to reject School A as the location for my case study but I did plan to make my research methods sensitive to the influence of gender, particularly by mapping it in my fieldnotes (my fieldnotes proforma had a space for sketching the layout of the room and where everyone sat; see Appendix 1) and designing some questions in my interviews and focus group to explore gender differences in students' prosocial behaviour and their responses to different activities.

In close proximity to School A were two selective grammar schools (one all girls and one all boys) and an academy which had been rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted. The selective schools tended to attract many of the most advantaged students. In 2011, School A was relatively small and undersubscribed, with only 710 students on roll. It had a higher than national average proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, including students with moderate and complex learning difficulties and, according to its 2009 Ofsted inspection report, students entered Year 7 with 'significantly' lower educational standards than average (Ofsted, 2009a, p. 5). In 2011, 38% of Year 11 students attained 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or higher, including maths and English, which was well below the national average of 59% that year (Education, 2012).

Attendance had been lower than average for many years and was still lower than average (Ofsted, 2009a). In my role as an assistant headteacher at a neighbouring school I knew the local area and its schools well and I think it would be fair to say that staff and students at School A faced tougher challenges than most of their peers in other schools.

However, although students' progress during their time at the school was still only satisfactory, it was improving and in 2008 the school had achieved its best ever GCSE results (Ofsted, 2009a). Behaviour was judged by Ofsted to have improved significantly as a result of the school's strategies and students were said to 'understand their responsibilities to society and especially the immediate community' (Ofsted, 2009a, p. 6). Which strategies had improved behaviour were not detailed but the students' 'sound understanding of social, moral and cultural issues' was credited to 'a comprehensive humanities and pastoral programme' and peer-mentoring was said to develop 'a sense of responsibility for others' (Ofsted, 2009a, p. 6). The 2009 report said that some parents and students had raised concerns about behaviour in lessons and bullying but that the school had 'introduced comprehensive strategies' to tackle anti-social behaviour and encourage positive behaviour (Ofsted, 2009a, p. 7). Once again, what these strategies were is not elaborated on and Vertical Tutoring is never mentioned, perhaps because it had only been introduced in 2008.

However, when I first asked for volunteers to take part in my research, at a meeting of local assistant and deputy heads, School A's deputy immediately volunteered her school, telling me she thought it was the best single initiative the school had ever introduced. Despite the practical impossibility of proving such causal relationships and even bearing in mind that she was a senior leader with an investment in introducing this initiative, it struck me that she should feel so strongly (I met with her professionally every three weeks for two years and had never known her exaggerate or boast). It also struck me that one initiative could apparently make a significant difference to a school with some serious challenges, so I was very keen to find out more. As previously stated in 3.2, both School A and another, School B, both responded to my request for participants but I decided to use School A for several reasons.

Firstly, although School A's deputy headteacher felt VT had had a significant impact, they were very interested in an analysis of what they were doing by an outsider. I therefore felt sure that what I wanted to do would benefit my participants and this was ethically extremely important to me.

Secondly, I reasoned that because School A was in its third year of VT and many pupils and most tutors at School A had experience of both HT and VT, they might have more opinions about whether and how the verticality of vertical tutor groups affected activities' promotion of prosocial behaviour.

Finally, although School B had in many ways a more balanced demography, whilst School A had more boys than girls, very few ethnic minorities and higher than average numbers of lower attaining and special needs students, I felt that its more challenging circumstances made it a more challenging place for VT to work and therefore perhaps a more interesting lense for examining activities in VTGs through (Robson, 2002). School B had also been extremely supportive, but it had already been rated outstanding by Ofsted (Ofsted, 2009c). It even enjoyed a spacious, state-of-the-art, fantastically resourced and frankly quite beautiful new building. I felt that this alone might be producing a 'feelgood factor' that may have improved classroom climate. Because of the

disadvantages described above and my experience there during my first attempt to explore vertical tutoring, I reasoned that any impact of vertical tutoring on the students' behaviour might stand out more in School A.

3.3.6 Why TG1 and TG2?

According to Merriam, 'nonprobability sampling is the method of choice in *qualitative* case studies' (Merriam, 1988, p. 47). Because my research was going to be qualitative, statistical generalisation was not the aim. The form of nonprobablistic sampling I decided to use was *reputational-case selection* (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2008; Merriam, 1988), whereby I asked the Deputy Headteacher at School A to choose for me two tutor groups where she thought I would see plenty of activity and which would be examples of good practice in the school. This was not so the school could show off, but because I would learn nothing from studying a tutor group where, for whatever reason, they weren't doing much. The purpose of my research was to gain an insight into a phenomenon and this kind of *purposive sampling* allowed me to select a sample from which I could learn the most (Merriam, 1988; Robson, 2002).

The Deputy Headteacher chose two tutor groups which I decided to call TG1 and TG2, for clarity and anonymity. TG1 was tutored by an experienced tutor, T1, who had been at the school for long enough to understand the changes in the context over a longer time frame. She was very competent and had an excellent rapport with her tutees, but she was perhaps also more traditional with a healthy natural scepticism and a dry wit. TG1 also had Paul, one of the school's few black students. T2, the tutor of TG2, was also an extremely competent tutor who had a warm rapport with her group. She was only in her third or fourth year of teaching but she had played a role in the introduction of VT to the school, so was well-versed in the aims and concepts of VT.

I planned my case study to take place over a five week period, spending two weeks with each tutor group for observations and interviews of pupils and then 1 week to interview tutors. I judged that this would be long enough for me to get to know the pupils by name, become familiar to the pupils and to see a

variety of activities. Unfortunately this had to take place after the summer exams, when Year 11 and Year 13 pupils had gone on study leave, meaning that I would not see these older pupils participating in activities or see tutor groups doing activities with their full numbers. In addition one tutor group did not have any Year 12s and the other had only two (and these only came in to tutor time when they had lessons in the morning on that day). This was probably the most serious weakness of my final research but it was unavoidable due to my need to complete my fieldwork by the end of the school term. I planned to counterbalance this by asking younger pupils and tutors specific questions about the role of these older pupils in activities, and by closely observing Year 12s when they were in tutor time. The advantage was that it would be a chance to try and find out if Year 10s, who were now the oldest, might change their behaviour as a result.

A disadvantage of TG1 and TG2 was that the imbalance of boys and girls in the school's intake, which I already knew about (see 3.3.5 above), was excacerbated in these tutor groups by two other factors. Firstly, the way the school allocated students to its vertical tutor groups took very careful consideration of who may and may not work and behave well together and prioritised this over achieving exactly equal numbers of boys and girls in each tutor group (which was anyway impossible for the reasons given in 3.3.5). This meant that the school's limited number of girls was not spread equally across all tutor groups. At the time I visited, two of the three girls in TG1 were in Year 8 and both girls in TG2 were in Year 10, meaning that I was unable to collect first person accounts from girls of different year groups in one tutor group (the third girl in TG1 was in Year 9 but had very irregular attendance – see below).

Secondly, the time at which I was able to do my case study field research was after the date at which Year 11s (nearly all sixteen years old) had finished their final exams and either left the school for good or would not return until the start of Year 12. Both TG1 and TG2 had had several Year 11 girls (in TG1 there had been three) but they had all left school by the time I did my research.

Conversely, both of the tutors chosen for me by the Deputy Headteacher were women, meaning that male tutors were unrepresented in my research (although I had observed and talked to male tutors in my earlier visit to the school, see 3.2). This was a pity, because tutors must surely have a significant influence on the tutor groups norms and the nature of those norms and the way they are promulgated may well be influenced by the tutor's gender.

Both these issues meant that both genders were under-represented in different ways. However, as gender differences were not the primary focus of my research questions and the tutors and tutor groups were good candidates for my study for the reasons given above, I decided to accept the Deputy Head Teacher's choice. Instead I decided to ensure that my research methods and analyis were sensitive to the influence of gender. In particular, I was aware of the following possibilities:

1. The tutors might provide more activities that they thought would suit boys, or that they found boys responded well to, because they had a majority of boys.

2. The kind of role models and social norms the tutors, and the older students, provided might be influenced by their gender; they might reflect some of the findings about gender differences described in my literature review (see 2.3.2).

3. The kind of prosocial behaviour observed and reported by participants; it might reflect some of the findings about gender differences described in my literature review (see 2.3.2) or the reporting of it might be affected by any difference in the value placed on different kinds of behaviour by different genders

3.4 Data collection: a multi-method approach

I decided to use a mixture of qualitative methods of data collection for three reasons.

Firstly, I knew that because my research questions were qualitative ones which could only be answered by collecting subjective experiences and opinions, a mixed method approach would allow me to access a variety of points of view in a variety of ways and to triangulate (Gillham, 2000b; Robson, 2002). Interpretations based on one method might be confirmed, qualified or challenged by data from another, increasing the validity of my final conclusions.

Similarly, as one of the main advantages of doing a case study was its power to generate hypotheses (Byrne, 2009; Gerring, 2007; Hammersley and Gomm, 2000; Merriam, 1988), looking at the same phenomenon from different perspectives would create the most fertile ground for this because what did not occur to me from my observations might occur to a participant in an interview, and what did not occur to a participant in an interview might occur to them in discussion with a peer in a focus group, and so on.

Thirdly, in keeping with Bassey's concept of relatability, I wanted to maximise the depth and variety of relevant data presented to any reader. According to Guba and Lincoln, the extent to which a reader can transfer the research findings to their own context depends on their judgement about its 'degree of fittingness' and in order for the reader to assess this the researcher needs to provide as 'thick' a description of the case study's context as possible (Geertz, 1973, p. 3; Guba and Lincoln, 2000, p. 40). My ethical duty and promise of anonymity to my participants precludes me from including some details about the context of my research because it would give away who said what, however I actually think that in very large part the relatability of my research depends as much on a thick description of the activities and the prosocial behaviour as a thick description of the school, tutors and pupils. Once again, a multi-method approach was clearly the best way to provide this.

For all the reasons above, I seriously considered adding a quantitative method to my research design, either a questionnaire survey of pupils and staff or the use of School A's data on incidents, rewards and sanctions. For example, I wondered if an increase in the number of merit certificates awarded to pupils

might point to an increase in prosocial behaviour. I also thought that a questionnaire asking a large sample of students about the activities and prosocial behaviours that a small group had discussed in interviews might allow generalisations about any causal links between activities and prosocial behaviour.

I decided against doing so for a number of reasons. First and foremost, relatability rather than generalisation was my aim. Given the finite resources of my time and word limit, quantitative data would have to have been at the expense of qualitative data and I decided that, for the same reasons I had chosen to do a case study, a thick qualitative description was my priority. Secondly, questionnaire and/or school data would still only tell me about one school, not significantly increasing the generalisability or reliability of my research as far as a professional from another school was concerned. Lastly, data such as the number of merit certificates awarded would be an extremely unreliable indicator of prosocial behaviour. I know from experience that individual teachers vary widely in the extent to which they reward students in this way. Instead I decided to rely on three qualitative methods which would allow me to take full advantage of the case study approach and that would complement each other: one-to-one pupil and tutor interviews, and a pupil focus group (Bassey, 1999; Robson, 2002).

3.4.1 Observation

I chose observation, and planned to use it first, primarily because it gave me some shared context in which to discuss pupils' and tutors' experiences in focus groups and interviews – I could much better ask questions and understand the answers if I have seen some of what they did and talked about. However it was also a very effective way of gathering data about the process of activities, because I could see them in practice, and about the reality of prosocial behaviour, because I could directly see where pupils chose to sit, their body language and their actions, and listen to what they said to each other.

The purpose of my case study was to see things, as much as possible, as they were in their natural context so I did not seek any other role within each tutor group than that of observer and did not intend to actively participate in what they or their tutor did. In addition, my desire to provide as thick a set of data as possible meant that I wanted to spend most of my time writing notes. Nevertheless I expected and wanted to get to know the pupils and be able to talk to them while I was observing them. It would have been logistically impossible (as well as ethically dubious) to conceal my role as a researcher and whilst I was aware that this might have 'a disturbing effect on the phenomena' I hoped that knowing my purpose would actually stimulate pupils reflect and volunteer information (Robson, 2002). In fact on one occasion I did record an event which may have been an example of the Hawthorne Effect (see 3.6.3 and 4.4.7) but even if it was, the fact that it occurred is relevant to my conclusions about how prosocial behaviour may be promoted.

Each day of the first week I planned to focus my observations on a different pupil, in anticipation that the tutor group may often be divided into smaller groups and I would have to pick one rather than try and follow them all. The pupils were selected after discussion between myself and their tutor, in which I expressed my desire to see a range of ages, genders and broad types (for example introverts and extroverts). Although, as discussed above (see 3.3.5), there were significantly more boys than girls, I had to ensure that they were represented in my study. In TG1 there were two girls in Year 8 and one who was in Year 9 but who had irregular attendance, so I decided to only plan to observe and interview one of the Year 8 girls because in other ways they were quite similar (and they were close friends). However, I did plan to talk to the Year 9 girl during my observation when the occasion arose and raise the issue of what is was like to be in a predominantly male tutor group with the Year 8 girl I interviewed and the tutor. Similarly, in TG2 there was only one Year 10 girl who regularly attended and another whose attendance was very irregular. Once again, I planned to raise the male majority issue with the girl and her tutor when I interviewed them. This was not ideal but I think that the range of ages I was able to observe and talk to was a more important focus, given the significance of the mixed age nature of the tutor groups to my study.

After the tutor and I discussed potential interviewees, their tutor asked them if it was acceptable to them that I observe and then ask them questions about it later. The focal students (the names are pseudonyms) were:

From TG1:	From TG2:
Jack (Year 7 - male)	Leon (Year 7 - male)
Ben (Year 8 - male)	Aaron (Year 8 - male)
Travis (Year 9 - male)	Jared (Year 9 - male)
Karen (Year 8 - female)	Glen (Year 12 - male)
Paul (Year 10 - male)	Briony (Year 10 - female)

Then at the end of the first week I met with those pupils, asked if they were happy to be interviewed and arranged to interview them in the lesson following break (which followed tutor time) on a day convenient to them in the second week after I'd observed them a second time. This allowed me to use that day's activity as a starting point for my interviews with them.

Because I was seeking a broad range of qualitative data rather than looking for very specific signs within the framework of a theory, I took a narrative approach to recording data from my observations (Robson, 2002), handwriting fieldnotes during tutorial sessions to maximise their immediacy and accuracy (Foster, 1998). However, based on my research questions and experience from my first attempt, I did devise a four page 'fieldwork form' on Microsoft Word which included prompts for me to note specific features of the activities such as rules, groupings, aims, resources, timings etc (see Appendix 1). I also took Foster's advice to 'record as much as possible about the physical, social and temporal context in which the behaviour occurred' and included specific sections in my fieldnotes for room layout, seating arrangements, weather and school events that might influence behaviour (Foster, 1998, p. 84). At the end was ample space for narrative notes about how the activities went and what occurred during them. Anything I did not have time to write during the session I added in a different pen in my car immediately afterwards.

I had originally thought that the degree of difficulty, pupil efficacy and level of engagement in activities might be something about which I could make a rough judgement and so I included these in my field notes form. However, in practice I felt it was not very valid for me to make even a rough judgement about difficulty for such a wide range of other people and instead the interviews with pupils and tutors, and the focus group, provided more useful data with regard to whether and how these variables in each activity influenced the promotion of prosocial behaviour.

3.4.2 Interviews with pupils and tutors

I wanted to individually interview a purposive sample of five pupils from each tutor group as well as both tutors so I could get beneath the surface of what I had observed and not only learn more about what I had seen, but learn about activities and examples of prosocial behaviour that had occurred outside the period of my observations (which was obviously the vast majority of them). I also thought this was the only way to get any understanding of any causal links between structured activities and unstructured prosocial behaviour.

I planned to interview the pupils on whom I had focused my observations in the lesson following break after the tutor time in the second week in which I had observed them. The duration of the interviews was relatively open-ended because we had a whole 50 minute lesson in which to do it, although I knew from my interviews with pupils in Phase 1 that they were unlikely to last longer than 20 minutes. The interviews took place in the library which was little used at the time and which provided a quiet, 'naturalistic', informal and safe environment in which to talk (Wilson, 1998, p. 112). Before the interviews I explained what I wanted to talk about and that, with their permission, I would be recording the interview so I could write it up accurately later but that they would only be referred to by a pseudonym. If this was acceptable to them then I gave them a consent form to sign and return to me before the interview started. I expected it to be acceptable because I had already told them I would want to record it before they agreed to be interviewed, but I wanted to give them the chance to opt out if they changed their mind on the day. In the event, no one

did choose to opt out but if they had chosen to do so, I was prepared to note the answers to their questions much as I had done with my observations in my fieldnotes.

I began each interview with a list of questions which were always aimed at getting to the same issues but served only as starting points for what I hoped would be a more naturalistic and productive conversation (Wilson, 1998) in which I would allow discussion to develop organically in order to explore rich veins of data when they appeared. These starting point questions were broadly similar for each pupil but adapted so that we could talk about the part I had observed them play in tutorial sessions and issues that other interviewees had raised (for example see Appendix 2). One question I asked them all though, 'What would you do if you were the tutor?', was designed as a pupil-friendly way of accessing their interpretation of their experiences, knowledge of themselves and their fellow students.

Interviews with tutors were arranged at times to suit them in the week after my four weeks of observations and pupil interviews, during lunch or a non-contact period, which allowed 50 minutes for each tutor. Tutors were informed that interviews would be recorded for the purposes of accurate writing up but that they would only be referred to by a code (although of course the fact that there were only two tutors meant that it would not be hard for someone who worked with them to identify who said what; unfortunately though this would be unavoidable).

As with the pupils, I had a list of questions to use as starting points but aimed to develop this into a conversation in which the tutor would, as much as answering my questions, be reflecting aloud on her experience.

3.4.3 Pupil focus group

I used a focus group for the same reasons that I used interviews, to stimulate the revelation of more qualitative data about how the pupils felt and thought about their experiences of VT activities and prosocial behaviour; to find out

about things I had not seen and to find out more about things I had seen; and to find out if they thought there were causal links between activities and the characteristics of these and prosocial behaviour. I hoped that what a focus group might add to my interview data was the ideas generated by discussion between pupils from the two different tutor groups, who should find making comparisons between their experiences food for thought, just as I did.

I conducted the focus group during a twenty-five minute tutorial session in a free classroom in the week after my four week period of observations and interviews because I reasoned that I would be a more effective moderator once I had got to know the pupils. The pupils would already know me as well as they were going to and I would be able to guide their discussion (or at least start it off) on the topics that had become most salient during individual interviews (which was important because we had less time for each individual to speak). As with the interviews I had a short list of questions, with which to begin and return to if discussion faltered, but my aim was to let them lead the discussion as long as it remained on topic. The members of the focus group were purposively selected by the tutors to ensure that there would be a cross section of the tutor groups' populations present on the day and that the participants would be willing to contribute. Although it included some pupils who had been interviewed before (because I wanted to ensure there was a girl from each tutor group and because I wanted to ensure a range of ages), the tutors also chose some voices who had not been heard. The list was as follows:

From TG1:	From TG2:
Ben (Year 8 – male)	Ben (Year 8 – male)
Karen (Year 8 – female)	Mario (Year 9 – male)
Lyndon (Year 7 – male)	Briony (Year 10 – female)

I bore in mind that the predominance of boys might affect the girls' willingness to speak, as well as what they said, and planned to ensure that I was at least able to give them an equal chance to speak in my role as facilitator. In the light of harsh experience from my first attempt, all interviews and focus groups were recorded using two devices to provide back up in case of technical difficulties

with one. I then transcribed my recordings into Microsoft Word so that they could be cut and pasted into the Nvivo 8 qualitative data analysis program.

3.5 Data analysis

Although I was collecting data from three different methods it was all in the form of text and I knew that any themes or patterns would be found in the data across all three, so I collated it all in the same Nvivo project. I used a qualitative data analysis program because I knew I would need to process a very large amount of textual data in an organic way, in keeping with my flexible, inductive methodological approach. I chose Nvivo because I had become proficient in using it during my Institution Focused Study, which had also been based largely on observations and a focus group, and because its system of organising textual data into nodes on a tree, and of allowing me to prune or grow that tree wherever and whenever I needed to, suited my aim of finding themes and patterns and then generating hypotheses (Robson, 2002; Silverman, 2001).

Because I was not trying to quantify the occurrence of any particular variable I did not plan to code my data. Instead I decided I would import my transcribed fieldnotes and recordings into Nvivo as sources and create six nodes (see Appendix 5) based on the research questions. Then I would go through my sources line by line, cutting and pasting them into these nodes, which I could continually add to, divide, merge and rename whenever I felt it appropriate. Because this was a kind of rolling data analysis I also had a paper notebook in which to jot themes, patterns and conclusions as they emerged.

3.6 Methodological issues encountered

Overall, my research design went as close to following my plan as one would wish a flexible design to go. However I did encounter a number of methodological issues which affected my data collection and analysis.

3.6.1 Sampling issues: the lack of older students and girls

I knew there would be a lack of older students (Years 11-13) in all aspects of the data gathering due to the timing of my case study (see 3.3.4), however I had some good and bad luck in this area. My bad luck was that Glen, the Y13 who had played such a prosocial role in TG2 and who I was able to observe in two sessions with them, suddenly announced he was leaving the day before I was planning to interview him, denying me the chance to find out about things from his perspective. The other sixth former in TG2 attended very erratically, so I was not able to use him as a substitute. Fortunately in TG1, whose older pupils had all left after their GCSEs or A Levels, I had better luck than expected because one of their sixth formers unexpectedly turned up to spend a session with their old tutor group and I was able to see at first hand the prosocial role they played, and which his tutor and fellow tutees had said so much about. This lack of older students has several implications for the validity of my results. First of all, my data about their prosocial behaviour and response to different activities comes mainly from what their tutors and younger fellow students said about them. The oldest students seemed to have had a considerable degree of respect from their tutors and younger classmates and this may have biased the details my participants recalled and the way they described them to me, a 'halo effect' which could have produced an overly favourable account of their role. Alternatively, the older students' prosocial behaviour might have been under-stated if they did things that their tutors did not see or hear about and if their younger classmates forgot or failed to notice small or subtle prosocial actions the older ones did on their behalf. Secondly, it is impossible to draw any conclusions about how the oldest students felt about their role. The tutors and several younger students felt that their older classmates acted very responsibly and were motivated by prosocial attitudes but the older students may have resented the burden of responsibility, been motivated by fear of their tutors' disapproval and done as little as they thought they could get away with. As a result I had to acknowledge this in my conclusions and qualify my statements accordingly (see 6.1.1).

As with the lack of older students, I knew that another issue would be the under-representation of girls in my data (see 3.3.5) and I addressed this issue

by asking the tutors for their experience of their other female tutees' prosocial behaviour and response to different activities, and by taking the opportunity to observe and talk to the the low attending girl in TG1, Tracey, and observe the low attending girl in TG2, Summer, when they were present. I was also fortunate that the girl I could interview in TG1 was a different age (13) to the one I could interview in TG2 (15), giving me some range in the age of my female participants. Nevertheless, although my case study was exploratory and like many such studies, not intended to produce statistical conclusions based on a purposive sample the under-representation of female student perspectives in my case study did place an extra limit on the conclusions I was able to draw. Furthermore, as already mentioned (see 3.3.6), it should also be noted that both tutors were female, which meant that I did not collect any data about how male tutors might deliver activities and perceive their students' prosocial behaviour.

3.6.2 Observing, assessing and recording specific aspects against field note prompts

Focusing on one pupil in each tutor time enabled me to more effectively track each activity as a process, whilst still being able to include more general observations about the rest of the tutor group. However, although the prompts in my fieldnotes had been prepared with a lot of small group work in mind, I in fact found that most of the activities I observed were conducted entirely or mostly as a whole class and without different roles formally assigned to any pupils. I also found that several sections of my fieldnotes form overlapped, such as 'Motivation' and 'Enjoyment' (see Appendix 1), to the extent that I always gave the same or similar levels and comments to both. This was probably because in almost every case the pupils seemed most motivated by an intrinsic enjoyment of the activities. However, as there are situations when pupils may be highly motivated (perhaps by anticipation of external reward or sanction) to complete an activity but not enjoying it I do feel that they were useful prompts that made me look carefully at each pupil and think about whether they were enjoying what they were doing and what might be motivating them. Their comments about the activities in their interviews usually indicated that my

admittedly intuitive assessment of motivation/enjoyment was approximately correct, but two pupils, Travis and Karen, proved hard to interpret.

3.6.3 An example of the Hawthorne Effect?

It is, of course, impossible to know the extent to which my presence altered the pupils' or their tutors' behaviour. Although both T1 and T2 commented, when I asked informally, that what I was seeing was 'normal', there was one occasion (already alluded to in 3.4.1), when it seemed that questions I asked an interviewee may well have altered his behaviour. The day after interviewing Raul and exploring the topic of Year 12 and 13 boys intervening to manage the misbehaviour of younger ones, I observed him attempt to do the same thing. A Year 7 boy was messing about with an electric piano in the tutor room before the tutor arrived and Raul told him off for doing this. Although the boy continued to do this, Raul continued to challenge him and then turned off the piano when the Year 7 boy would not stop. I had not seen Raul intervene like this before when the Year 7s had messed about. I asked his tutor what she thought and she agreed it might be possible that Raul was influenced by the conversation, but also that the fact that some of the older pupils had left may have made him feel like he had a greater responsibility now. Raul was, according to my contact with him and his tutor's report, quite a conscientious young man who may have felt a duty to step into this role, but it is possible my questions and my presence in the background when the incident occurred accelerated the process.

3.6.4 More structured interview and focus group questions

As planned, I followed a flexible approach to designing my questions for each interviewee, using my observation of the focal students to plan structured questions with which to begin my interviews with them. This allowed plenty of time for unstructured, probing questions to explore their initial responses in depth. However, a re-examination of my data during the writing of my discussion chapter made me wish I had prepared a few more structured questions to explore three important areas. Firstly, I would like to have asked what the students understood about their fellow tutees' needs and what they themselves thought they might gain from their own prosocial acts. This might

have enabled me to more effectively (though by no means thoroughly) analyse their ability to empathise and their cognitive ability to perceive any general social contract of reciprocity. I may then have been able to more accurately describe their prosocial behaviour in terms of cognitive development and answer my research questions in more detail. Secondly, Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory focuses on understanding and motivation to help and *assumes* action on the basis of that motivation and understanding. My interviews could have used a structured question to find out more about the difference between what students wanted to do to help and what they felt they could do. This might have helped me better distinguish which phase they were operating at and aided my own revision of the phases and techniques used to promote progression through them.

3.6.5 Interviewee reticence

Two of the male interviewees were unable or unwilling to expand very much on their answers, especially with regard to explaining the reasons why they felt or acted a certain way. These interviewees gave very short answers or said they did not know when asked open questions. I had observed both boys to be confident and talkative in class, so there are a number of explanations. They may not have felt comfortable giving details to me, or they may not have been used to thinking about this topic in such depth. I tried to rephrase my questions and use the things I had observed as stimuli, and this did elicit some deeper detail. I did not want to ask leading questions but sometimes to get any indication of their reason for something I had to suggest one and ask them if that was it.

3.6.6 Interviewer loquacity

Another issue, which I should have predicted from my life as a teacher, was that I talked too much and sometimes repeated myself, giving less room to my interviewees. On reflection I think I was trying too hard to explain my own questions in order to access the aspects of their experience that I was most interested in and after hearing the first recordings I tried to curb this. What was also a challenge was needing to give examples and suggestions in order for the

students to give their opinions, but not putting words in their mouths. I addressed this by trying to always give alternatives, for example 'Do you think if X happened it would help or it wouldn't make any difference?'

3.6.7 Interruptions and changes to the observation and interview schedule with TG2

On the Tuesday of the second week with TG2, Aaron was absent so I interviewed Raul instead. The following day I had a job interview straight after my observation so I planned to reschedule Leon for the following week. Thursday of the second week with TG2 the school was closed due to strike action so there were no observations or interviews and I rescheduled Jared for the following week. Finally, on the Friday of the second week with TG2 the tutorial session was cancelled so that the Sports Day relay event, which had be cancelled due to rain on the Wednesday, could be completed. Glen had left so I interviewed Leon instead. This obviously reduced the amount of data I could collect and losing my only interview with a sixth form tutee was a serious blow.

3.6.8 Problems identifying pupils when transcribing the focus group

When I conducted the focus group I knew all the participants by name and, especially as they varied in age and gender, I thought I would be able to identify them easily on the recording. I also planned to use their names as often as possible when asking for and acknowledging their contributions (eg. 'What do you think X?' and 'That's interesting Y'). However, in practice some of the most interesting comments, especially by the younger boys, were said quietly, at the same time as someone else was speaking or in very rapid succession, so sometimes I could not identify them and had to refer to them only as 'one of the younger male pupils' in my analysis. Most of the time I do not think this affects my overall conclusions or the relatability of this study, but it reduces the level of detail. I do not think that insisting on turntaking and using the name of every speaker would have worked because it would have stilted the freeflow and spontaneity of ideas, which was the main advantage of this method. I had thought about videoing the focus group, which would have solved the

identification problem, but this too may have made some participants more reticent and some parents are uncomfortable about their children being videoed by outsiders.

3.6.9 Timing

Although work and family commitments forced me to conduct my research in June, I would have preferred to have collected my data earlier in the school year when all seven year groups were there. In particular. it would be very interesting to do some observation and interviews in September so I could see the ice-breaking and teambuilding activities for myself and study a new batch of Year 7s being inducted. Then it would be useful to return to observe and interview the same pupils later in the year, perhaps after Christmas, to see how relationships had developed. It would also be interesting to do a similar case study at a school which only had Years 7-11, to compare the behaviour of the Year 11s there, who would be the oldest, with the Year 11s and Year 13s at a Year 7-13 school to see to what extent being the oldest was more important than how old.

3.7 Ethical issues

Case studies present special ethical problems for researchers due to the ease with which other members of the institution being studied can infer the identity of participants from their context or comments, even if they have been anonymised in the writing up.

Bassey's philosophy about the legitimacy and ethics of case study resonated with me and provided a useful moral compass. He emphasised the following three points:

1. In a democratic society, researchers can expect the 'freedom to investigate and ask questions' but this comes with a responsibility to respect other people's freedoms and safety.

2. Researchers are obliged not to falsify information or deceive themselves

or others, intentionally or unintentionally.

3. Researchers who are 'taking data from persons, should do so in ways that recognize those persons' initial ownership of the data and which respect them as fellow human beings who are entitled to dignity and privacy.'

(Bassey, 1999, p. 74)

Bassey points out that these three can clash and indicates that he and other researchers have tended to show more respect for other people's rights to dignity and privacy than their own right to publish their findings. He adds that BERA has added a fourth 'respect':

4. 'Respect for educational research itself' - this asks researchers not to do their research in any way that will make it more difficult for other researchers in the future.

(Bassey, 1999, p. 74)

This acknowledgement of the difficulty does not help the individual researcher to judge that fine balance between the interests of studying education in the hope of improving it and protecting the feelings, careers and reputations of one's participants. However, like Bassey I have erred on the side of my participants. I have been very aware that my analysis and discussion of data about activities in tutor groups could potentially be misconstrued as evaluations of individual tutors' professional competence or individual pupils' ability or behaviour. There is also the possibility that a comment made by a tutor or pupil and repeated by me in my thesis could damage either their or another's reputation or relationship with their peers. I have sought to guard against these potential harms in four ways. Firstly, true to the principle of informed consent (BERA, 2011), I have been clear to my participants about how they will be identified and where it will be written up, so they have the power to judge for themselves what they do and do not want to risk saying. Secondly, although (after seeking their permission) I have thanked both schools that helped me in the acknowledgements section of this thesis I have anonymised them

everywhere else as School A and School B. I have likewise anonymised the pupils and staff everywhere. Thirdly, I have omitted any information that might be used to identify the schools, staff or pupils that is not explicitly relevant to my analysis and conclusions. Fourthly, I have been careful to present my data and use language in ways that are accurate but not pejorative and which could not be easily misused to harm any of my participants.

Finally, an ethical issue that I was already very well aware of from my professional work was the need to safeguard young people and myself. This required me to take three steps.

1. None of my participants could be contacted directly from information in my thesis.

2. Interviews and focus groups were conducted in strict accordance with each school's own safeguarding policies.

3. Interviews and focus groups were conducted in 'goldfish bowl' locations where other people were either present (not within earshot but where they could see what was going on) or nearby and able to look in at anytime.

I judged that these provided a satisfactory compromise between the need for somewhere where participants felt safe enough to honestly express their views about the subject and the need to maintain – and be seen to maintain – appropriate boundaries between adult and child.

CHAPTER 4 – DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

I used Nvivo to organise and analyse my data in an organic way, and to reorganise it as themes and patterns emerged. What follows is my analysis of that data.

The table below lists the activities I observed and the student I observed and/or interviewed on each day.

DAY/ WEEK	TG	FOCAL STUDENT	ACTIVITY
Mon 1	1	Jack	Talking about the holidays
Tue 1	1	Ben	Story discussion+In the News
Wed 1	1	Travis	Buddy Day Grade Review
Thu 1	1	Karen	In the News
Fri 1	1	Paul	Talking about achievements
Mon 2	1	Ben	In the News
Tue 2	1	Karen	Writing self-report
Wed 2	1	Travis	The Describing Game
Thu 2	1	Jack	Finding out something new about partner+In the News
Fri 2	1	Paul	The Describing Game
Mon 3	2	Leon	Birthday Party
Tue 3	2	Aaron	Drama Games
Wed 3	2	Jared	Peer-teaching + Jewellery-making
Thu 3	2	Glen	Jewellery-making
Fri 3	2	Briony	In the News
Mon 4	2	Briony	Buddy Day (In the News)
Tue 4	2	Raul	Drama Games
Wed 4	2	Leon	Drama Games
Thu 4	X	X	STRIKE CLOSURE
Fri 4	1+2	X	SPORTS DAY

Table1: Activities observed and focal students

4.2 Activities and their promotion of prosocial behaviour

All the tutor groups at the school were meant to follow a schedule of activities and a calendar of ‘themes’ for several weeks at a time, although tutors were free to interpret this schedule in their own way and add activities of their own

(see Fig. 1 above). This meant that in several cases TG1 and TG2 did their own versions of the same activity and I have found it more revealing to examine these together, although I make it clear from which tutor group each data was collected. Furthermore, some activities, such as the drama games done by TG2 and the various Enrichment Day activities done by all tutor groups, provide more coherent insights when they are dealt with together. A brief outline of each discussion activity can be found in Appendix 4.

4.2.1 Planned Discussions (talk about the holidays, In the News, story discussion and talking about achievements)

Planned discussions were the most common type of activity I observed during my four weeks at School A, occurring in six out of the ten sessions I observed in TG1 and three out of the nine sessions with TG2. The lack of a weekly assembly may have increased the use of discussions at this time of year but 'In the News' was scheduled as the activity for the first session each week in the school's 'Advisory Programme' and based on what students and tutors said, planned discussions were common for the rest of the year too. I observed four types of planned discussion: 'In the News', when students discussed a current news story; a discussion of a radio story; a pair discussion, in which pupils were asked to find out something they did not already know about each other, and 'My Achievments this Year'. It was clear from interviewees that there were many other planned discussions on different topics throughout the year. None of these others was described in detail by my participants but the interview data indicates that the ones I observed were broadly representative of the process that was usually followed.

With regard to their promotion of prosocial behaviour, T1 said in interview that discussions in the mixed age tutor group could help make the pupils more open-minded about other people. She said that the pupils in her tutor group tended to have 'quite fixed ideas' but that 'once you get in a discussion and they hear a different point of view they become more open-minded'. T1 also thought that the the older pupils tended to have more tolerant views and that these had more of an influence on the younger pupils than she could herself:

T1 (interview): ‘That [having older pupils] really helps, because if you’ve got Mike [a Y12], he’ll suddenly throw something into the ring. They might listen to him more than someone like me, because they think: oh, I’m just preaching about the poor kids in Africa, whereas Mike, he’s one of them, so if he’s saying it, there’s got to be some weight to it…Because they [the sixth formers] say ‘oh well what about if you were in that situation? And blah blah blah’; they turn it round…’

T1 said she had never heard any extreme views from any of the sixth formers. She also said that her students had never derided each other’s views, because the group was smaller and ‘more intimate’, and that they showed consideration during discussions for a tutee who was autistic and could have been pushed to say things that they could have mocked. In interview, Paul also said that he thought his classmates empathised more with victims of disasters overseas after discussing the news. Of nine interviewees across both tutor groups, three (Jack, Leon and Jared) gave examples of how particular discussion activity experiences had increased their respect for another pupil and two (Paul, Jared and Briony) said that discussions were good for getting pupils to interact and know their fellow tutees. Jared described how:

Jared (interview): ‘we had to do this session where we talked about rights, and we talked about gay rights, which made me not hate him so much, because he said he’d rather judge people on the way they act and stuff like that, which sort of made me change my perspective on him a little more.’

However in her interview, Karen said that discussions helped her get to know her classmates in both good and bad ways, giving an example of how what another pupil said, in combination with how loud and talkative he was, affected her opinion of him and was a factor in why they would never be close. She did say though that this opinion would not stop her from helping him if he needed it.

There was interview evidence from two pupils, one in each tutor group (Jared, TG2, and Ben, TG1), which suggests that both tutors’ use of discussion was

appreciated in a democratic sense and that this may contribute to the mood of tolerance in the tutor groups. For example:

Jared (interview): ‘We do get to spend a lot more time like, discussing and like, having group discussions about stuff, or interacting, like we don’t just sort of get given a task and told to be quiet about it. We actually have a discussion, and you know, chat.’

The discussions I observed and that the participants referred to in their interviews were all or at least partly whole class, but the pupils were also directed to discuss issues in pairs or small groups, often prior to a whole class discussion. During some of these I observed prosocial behavior, such as when the pupils were asked to discuss their achievements that year prior to writing a report on themselves, Karen suggested positive aspects of Tracey’s schoolwork that she could include.

4.2.2 Buddy Day

Another activity scheduled for each tutor group once a week was ‘Buddy Day’, when two tutor groups would be joined together for one tutor time session. However, although I was with both tutor groups for two weeks each, other events meant that both tutor groups only did one Buddy Day in the time that I was with them. Interestingly, the two tutors used the time slightly differently.

For the TG2 Buddy Day, I observed the pupils joining another tutor group in that tutor group’s room and doing an ‘In the News’ activity, in which small groups of pupils searched one newspaper each for interesting articles to feedback to the class about. However, only one of these small groups was a mixture of pupils from both tutor groups (Leon, Ben and a Year 7 boy from the other tutor group) and the two tutor groups remained otherwise separate around separate islands of desks. When interviewed, Leon said he had made friends with the other Year 7 boy and interview responses from Raul and Jared, as well as some from the focus group, suggest that quizzes were a more common Buddy Day activity. According to the tutors and students, other Buddy Day activities included being

taught something related to the specialty of one of the two tutors, such as 'going down to science' to 'do little experiments'. However, what Briony and T2 said in interview confirmed that although the idea was that the two tutor groups would interact with each other, it 'doesn't really work that well' (Briony, interview). Indeed, T1 identified this as something she wanted to improve upon next year and felt that what was needed was to 'gel' the two groups together more.

By their own account, TG1 did similar things on Buddy Day but sometimes, instead of going with them, T1 used the opportunity of her tutor group being supervised by another tutor to allow her to work with a pair of her tutees on their own, and this is what I observed. T1 sat with Travis and Ben and showed them their actual grades and target grades on a laptop computer. She used this to stimulate a three-way discussion about what Ben was 'really like' in lessons and what he could do to improve. Both boys seemed very attentive and although Travis said relatively little (which was generally the case whenever I observed him), T1 did elicit some helpful comments from him about Ben. In the interview later, Travis said that he thought Ben and he could 'probably' help each other. In his interview, Jack described how T1 had done a similar thing with him and the other two Year 7 boys and this seems to have led to continuing undirected prosocial behaviour:

Jack (interview): '…Like three Year Sevens went off one day, in the room and we're just speaking about our grades and that, helping each other; how you can improve it and that. I think that everytime…. [INDISTINCT] they was Year Seven they went.'
GB: 'Do you think that worked?'
Jack: 'Yes, because my grades have gone up since then.'
GB: 'Really?'
Jack: 'So because they were like really low, but then I like started sitting with Lyndon and like paying attention, and my grades, some of my grades have gone up.'
GB: 'Because you're paying attention. What is it about sitting with Lyndon that made a difference?'
Jack: 'Well cause like I used to always sit with all the bad people and that and

muck around but when, since I'm like friends with Lyndon, well like best friends, I just sit with him and like he tells me like to calm down, or don't go over there and do stuff.'

Unfortunately I did not ask exactly what was said and by whom on that Buddy Day but I inferred that the 'how you can improve' they arrived at was that Jack should sit with Lyndon that Lyndon' continuing assistance was a prosocial act to help Jack stay out of trouble.

When interviewed, T1 explained why she thought these grade reviews in pairs/small groups of same age peers were effective:

T1 (interview): 'They can comment on each other because often they're in the same lessons and say 'what do you think?' and 'am I bad in this?', you know, 'how can I improve on that?', 'am I cheeky to the teacher?', 'am I not concentrating?'

However, T1 did not attempt to do these grade reviews with pairs of differently aged tutees (who obviously would not have been in classes together) so there was no opportunity to see whether advice from an older student would have been forthcoming or effective in changing the younger student's behaviour (or vice versa).

4.2.3 The Describing Game

Based on the enthusiasm with which they participated, 'The Describing Game' (see Appendix 4) was the most enjoyable and stimulating activity that TG1 did, certainly as a whole class. According to my interviews with T1 and Jack, it was used originally as a way of helping the tutees get to know each other and the first time I saw it, T1 said to me afterwards that they had not done it since several pupils had joined the form. What was most interesting from the point of view of promoting prosociality was the fact that, despite all the banter and the potential for people to be offensive and/or be offended, no one was. The game demanded that a pupil describe an unnamed fellow tutee in the manner of

various other things, for example what kind of fruit they would be. Therefore it was inherently personal and controversial (I noted one Year 7 boy asking at the end of one round: 'How can I be a pineapple?!') but the smiles and laughter around the room, as well as later requests to play it again (including from that Year 7 boy), suggested that it was done in good humour. When I later asked Paul if anyone ever got offended by someone else's description, he replied:

Paul (interview): 'No, we all take it as a joke, because we consider ourselves as a family and advisory group [tutor group].'

In his interview, Travis also confirmed that everyone really enjoyed that game.

4.2.4 The Birthday Party

The first planned activity I observed with TG2 was a party to celebrate one of the tutee's birthdays. T2 had brought some cake, crisps and drink and after sharing some of these, she got the whole form playing musical chairs and musical statues, which, with the exception of one pupil, Summer, they did enthusiastically. What impressed me most from the point of view of prosocial behaviour was not just their inclusive attitude to each other – they were warmly encouraging that Summer join in – but also signs of their openness to newcomers. Most tutor groups I have observed have been fairly indifferent to my presence at first but within a couple of minutes of my being introduced by T2, Aaron said ''Miss don't forget Mr Best' when the crisps were being handed out. However, it is true that Aaron was later described by T2 as her 'wingman', so perhaps he had a tendency to seek the attention and approval of teachers.

4.2.5 Drama Games

T2 was a drama teacher who used her knowledge and her access to the drama studio to do drama games with her pupils on a regular basis (3/9 observed sessions). The three games I saw with TG2 are outlined in detail in Appendix 4, along with another drama game I did not see but which interviewees and focus group participants from both forms referred to, which T1 called 'Fruit Salad'. In their interviews, T1 and T2 said that the purpose of these games was to help

the students get to know each other and enjoy each other's company, and what the students said suggests that they were successful in achieving this aim. Seven students commented in their interviews (Briony, Aaron, Karen, Paul, Travis, Jared, Leon). Briony said that the games bonded people together because they had to learn and use each other's names to play and Karen explained how 'You just start talking to each other when you're doing things'. Paul said that they made people see past physical appearances and find out what they were really like, 'in a good way'. The data suggests that the physical play element was fundamental to their success. In interview, T1 said of the game 'Fruit Salad' that 'it's very physical, it's very loud, it's very crash-bang-wallop and it gets everybody just, not worrying about anything'. Briony, who told me that she found initiating and sustaining conversations hard, claimed that the emphasis on physical more than conversational interaction in the games allowed people like her to interact and get to know the others without the intense pressure that she felt in conversation on its own. What some of the students said gave me the feeling that they wanted to be made to interact because the outcome of bonding with everyone was strongly desired but the process of achieving that could normally be awkward and uncertain. Jared actually said that he liked the drama games the most because 'it forces you to interact'. It was very interesting to observe two 16 year-old pupils, who were at the school for their induction to the sixth form and were completely new to the tutor group, enthusiastically joining in with a game of 'President President' and laughing along with the Year 7-10s. Leon commented on how he never thought he would be 'hanging out with sixteen and seventeen year olds' and that, although he had expected them to act cool, 'they actually get quite into it'.

According to T2, Fruit Salad was a very effective way of getting all the pupils to exchange information about themselves with the whole group because it made the social situation safe and fun. However, it did seem to be the physical aspect of all the drama games which made them so equal, inclusive and enjoyable.

4.2.6 Peer Teaching and Learning

At the beginning of one session with TG2 I observed a planned activity in which pupils in pairs were given a few minutes to each teach the other a new skill that they themselves already had (the current theme was 'learning new skills'). At this point in the session only four pupils were present, the others still being on their way back from their previous classes. This activity had only mixed success. One pair (Jared and Briony) just chatted but in the other pair, Raul succeeded in teaching Ben to play a short tune on the piano. In the interview afterwards, Raul told me he enjoyed doing this, and that Ben was keen to be taught, but that it was very hard to achieve much in so little time. When I reflected on what I had seen after the session, I speculated that the pairing of YEAR 9 Raul with YEAR 7 Ben may have been more successful because of the greater age difference and the friendly but not close relationship between them. I already knew from T2 that Briony and Jared were close friends (later confirmed by both pupils in their interviews), so it is perhaps unsurprising that they did not settle down to doing the activity in the brief time allotted to it. They may also not have been able to think of anything to teach each other and it is possible that the closer the pupils were in age, the less likely it was that one will know how to do something the other does not.

However, when the rest of the form arrived an interesting peer-learning activity followed on from the peer-teaching one. T2 provided her tutees with coloured plastic beads, plastic thread and pliers, and taught them how to make necklaces and earrings. All the pupils, from Year 7 Ben to Year 13 Glen, sat round the central desk and were completely absorbed in the task, which they continued with the following day. During this time Glen, who mastered the process quite quickly, helped Leon and the other boys several times, showing them how to do things and encouraging them. As well as the prosocial act of helping younger pupils learn a new skill, another benefit of this activity was that, as with Travis on the enrichment days (see 4.2.7 below), this practical activity gave a relatively non-academic pupil a chance to shine. As Briony explained in her interview:

‘GB: Has there ever been an activity which has made you see someone in a new way, has kind of changed your opinion of them or really revealed their personality to you?
Briony (interview): I found that Glen was quite good at the practical stuff at school when we were making the earrings. I found that he was quite good at all the practical work, ‘cause sometimes he finds it hard getting all the written work in on time. But yeah, in the earring making I found he was quite good at all the practicals and fiddly things. So yeah that kind of helped to get to know him.’

T2 commented during her interview that, now her tutees’ individual skills and strengths were being revealed and acknowledged by the rest of the form, she would be able to plan peer-teaching activities based on them. In addition, when interviewed, two pupils suggested activities in which tutees could help each other with academic work: Jack suggested tutees helping each other in pairs with their homework and Raul suggested a ‘learning day’ in which tutees shared the academic things they were stuck on and were then helped to understand by the rest of the form.

4.2.7 Enrichment days

Once at the beginning and once near the end of the year, the school organised an ‘Enrichment Day’ in which pupils spent the whole day in their tutor groups, doing a variety of teambuilding activities, ranging from traversing army-style obstacle courses to organising and performing fashion shows (see Appendix 4). Six out of the nine pupils interviewed felt that the teambuilding activities done on enrichment days were one of the most effective ways of getting the pupils to know and work with each other (Ben, Briony, Jared, Raul, Karen, Travis). The other three all said that they were enjoyable and wanted more of them, and there was collective approval of them as worthwhile by students in the focus group. T1 emphasised their importance in bonding the tutees when the VTGs were first created, in particular trying to overcome the resistance of the Year 10s and 11s, who were – as my review of internet sources suggested, is quite typical – strongly against the change. Although, according to T1, the pupils who were in Year 11 at the time of the change never really warmed to VT in that first

year, the enrichment days themselves did produce some examples of prosocial behaviour. T1 described how she, 'managed to get the Year 11 lad working with a Year 8 lad, doing this big sign, it was 1960s fashion, and they did that all day and worked together'. She went on to say that this Year 11 boy, who had since left the school, had come back to visit the tutor group recently, which suggests that in the long term some kind of bond with his fellow tutees from other year groups had been created. In contrast with this however, what T2 said of her Year 11s (of which she had five) and their response to activities generally in the first year suggested that, whilst the enrichment days helped most of the tutees bond, they did not overcome these particular Year 11s' disengagement:

T2 (interview): 'I am not saying that they were loud or behaved badly, but they were laid back and chilled out, do you know what I mean? They didn't help to motivate the younger ones to do the activities.'

The more physically active, and often outdoor, nature of the enrichment days seemed to facilitate prosocial behaviour in ways that activities based on more static and, perhaps for the pupils, abstract, discussion did not. T1 said that they gave someone like Travis, who struggled academically and was usually quite reticent in classroom activities but who was very good at sport, an opportunity to take the lead. This he apparently did very effectively, organising and encouraging his fellow pupils to perform in activities such as the fashion show. In his interview, Raul also made a point about enrichment days and pupil leadership, saying that he found it interesting to see how the mixed age group of pupils worked and learned together, and that these situations prompted the older ones to take leadership roles:

Raul (interview): 'They [YEAR 11-13s] were saying what to do and how to do things…the younger ones do seem to like, they do their own thing and the older ones sit back and watch it, but when we're doing activities, they all sort of take charge really.'

Finally, some enrichment days had an explicitly prosocial goal. When asked during his interview what the benefit of an enrichment day had been, Paul

replied that it was that they had raised money for charity. However, it was the school's choice that the activity should be a fundraising one, not the pupils', so the extent to which the pupils' motivation was the explicitly prosocial one of raising money for charity, the implicitly prosocial one of working together or the hedonistic one of not doing normal classes for a day, is unknown.

Furthermore, in spite of the general appreciation of enrichment days and their bonding effect, Jared did sound a note of caution, saying in his interview that: 'I think the bad things are sometimes they're a bit too free range, like the stupid kids who wanna mess around and throw stuff around, they can get a bit stupid and ruin it for people.'

4.2.8 Induction and 'getting to know you' activities

As well as drama games and the more elaborate and physical teambuilding activities done on enrichment days (see 4.2.5 and 4.2.7) at the beginning of each year, tutors also used a variety of simpler, classroom based induction and 'getting to know each other' activities, including a worksheet that pupils used as a framework to question their fellow tutees and induction buddying (see Appendix 4). Except for the partial exception described below, I did not see any of these because I was observing near the end of the year rather than the beginning, but the tutors and pupils mentioned them a number of times and the data on them is discussed here.

One activity described by Briony and Raul in their interviews was a worksheet of questions to ask the other people in the form, such as 'are you left-handed?' and 'do you like chocolate?'. Both pupils felt that this helped tutees to get to know each other and get talking.

Another activity for getting pupils to share information about themselves was something that T1 borrowed from her work as a Modern Foreign Languages teacher. She showed me a toy frog and told me how she would start off by throwing the frog to another pupil while saying something like 'I live in [HOME TOWN]' and the person who caught it said where they lived, then threw it to

another person accompanied by another statement of personal information such as age or the football team they supported. T1 said this was good because the pupils did not have to think too much or reveal anything very deep, and, like Fruit Salad (see 4.2.5 and Appendix 4), the physicality of it helped them to relax.

One pupil in the focus group, who unfortunately spoke too quietly to be identified from the recording, said that at the beginning of the school year, all the Year 8s had to show the new Year 7s round during tutor time. None of the other pupils mentioned this specific activity so perhaps it had not made much of an impression, but it also may have been because it was a relatively long time ago. However, in his interview, Paul, who had joined the school more recently during the year, said that being buddied with Scott had helped him a great deal and that they were now close friends who not only enjoyed each other's company but helped each other with school work.

The only induction-type activity I did see was in one of the TG1 sessions run by TG1's associate tutor T3, who asked the pupils to interview each other in pairs and find out one new thing about each other. The boys did not settle to this activity and although it was revealed that one of the girls did horseriding, none of the boys found out anything new and their answers when T3 asked them what they had learned were silly and made up. When I interviewed one of the boys, Jack, afterwards, he said that he already knew his partner very well so there was nothing for him to reveal or find out. It also seemed that because T3 was trying to check planners at the same time as the pupils were doing the activity, she was not able to ensure that the pairs remained on task.

4.2.9 Quizzes

Quizzes on various general knowledge topics were an activity that I never observed but were mentioned by both tutors and four pupils in their interviews (Paul, Travis, Raul, Leon) and one in the focus group (Lyndon).

Two pupils were negative about quizzes (Lyndon, Raul), two positive (Paul, Leon) and one neutral (Travis). In his interview, Leon mentioned that they had done a quiz in teams at the start of the year which had helped them bond through teamwork and said that if he was a tutor he would use them in the same way. He also cited them as an example of people helping each other in activities. However, speaking in the focus group he seemed to feel that quizzes were done too often on the buddy days with the other tutor group, and not enough in mixed tutor group teams. Several of the boys on the recording are heard murmuring their agreement with this and what Raul said in his interview implied that quizzes were used a lot on the TG2 buddy days. However, although Raul said quizzes were his least favourite activity, he said that was just a personal preference and that he thought the others, especially the younger pupils, really liked them.

There is some evidence that general knowledge quizzes could be a simple and effective way of engaging the pupils in mixed age collaborative activities where academic ability was not important. T2 explained how she had purposely put the pupils in mixed age teams for quizzes in order to break up the group of YEAR 11s who 'tried to act all cool' and get them to set a better example. In an informal conversation after one session, T3 explained how the boys in TG1 enjoyed boys versus girls team quizzes, even though the girls (who in this tutor group were outnumbered but of higher average academic attainment than the boys) usually won. T1 also told me how Mike would get the younger boys to be quiet during quizzes because he wanted to know the answers.

4.2.10 Reading

Reading was reported as an occasional tutor time activity by two interviewees from TG2 (Raul and Leon), although it did not occur during my observations. Leon said that it was his least favourite activity and Raul said that they had read *Blood Brothers* as a whole class, with each of them assigned different parts. However, there was no data linking it to the promotion of prosocial behaviour or conditions. T2 did say in her interview that Raul had emerged as a good actor,

so possibly this was based on his performance when reading his part in *Blood Brothers*.

4.2.11 Administrative activities

Tutor time at School A was also used for both regular administrative tasks, such as taking a register and checking pupil planners (see Appendix 4), and irregular ones such as briefing the pupils about events like Sports Day. As described in 4.2.8, in one of my observations, the completion of administrative tasks by TG1's associate tutor, T3, appeared to reduce the effectiveness of one the activities, distracting the pupils from doing it and her from monitoring and encouraging. Generally though, T1 and T2 managed to complete these tasks without interrupting activities, by getting them done quickly at the beginning or end of the session. The only time I saw a connection to prosociality was when T2 asked Glen to take the register, which he did efficiently. According to an unidentifiable male TG2 pupil recorded in the focus group, Glen did this quite often while T2 'sorted out a pupil in our advisory [tutor group]'. The pupil reported, with what I thought sounded like respect, that Glen 'didn't mess about, he just read out the names' and filled them in on the computer. The pupil went on to say that, 'I think they should let like, while the teacher sorts out paperwork, they should let like, he just said, let the older ones do it,…[INDISTINCT]…more responsibility so they know what to do.' This suggests to me that, when older pupils are given a role helping the tutor, it not only helps the tutor at that point but also sets a prosocial example to the younger pupils.

4.3 The influence of key activity variables on the promotion of prosocial behaviour

As well as the benefits specific to each activity, there were also certain features of activities in general which appeared to have an effect.

4.3.1 Pupils and grouping

Fourteen out of the twenty-one individual session activities I observed were done entirely as a whole class and therefore were mixed sex and mixed age. It must be noted that the tutor groups were only at two-thirds to three-quarters

strength due to the fact that Year 11s and some sixth formers had left, but from what the pupils and tutors said, these activities and games were usually conducted in this way, even when there were four to five more students present.

It could be argued that the jewellery making was an individual activity because the pupils each had responsibility for making their own item of jewellery, but T2 instructed them as a whole class and the pupils interacted with each other all the time, showing off what they had done, commenting on the process and asking for and giving help.

The tutors' preference for whole class activities may have been influenced by several factors. Firstly there was the small size of the tutor groups at this time, which had between six and eleven pupils (Wednesday 1 was the Buddy Day when I observed T1 working separately with Travis and Ben). This allowed the tutors to give everyone in the form a turn in activities like discussions (talking about the holidays, story discussion, In the News) and games (The Describing Game and drama games). T1 described the small tutor group as more 'intimate' and felt that this was one of the reasons why the pupils all respected each other's views and that strong personalities did not take over. Based on my observations I would disagree that strong, or at least loud and talkative, personalities like Ben never took over, in as much as they said a lot more than the others, but I did observe that younger and/or quieter tutees, like Karen, frequently contributed and were listened to when they did. Indeed, the tutors' gentle but frequent reminders to students to wait their turn to speak and not interrupt their peers were the most common example of tutors reinforcing the social norms that, according to Bar-Tal and Raviv, support the development of moral cognition (see 2.4). Secondly, according to the tutors, one of the main aims of these types of activities was bonding the whole form, which I think may be more likely to be successful if the whole form does the activities together. Ben seemed to support this hypothesis when he said during his interview that his form all got along because their tutor 'just teaches us as a whole class, not just individuals, if you get me. Like, she'll involve a group discussion'.

Thirdly it allows the tutors to be involved with all the pupils, all the time, rather than having to divide their time between different groups. Fourthly, these types of discussions and games lend themselves to larger groups and would possibly be much less fun in groups of less than six, because fewer opinions would be expressed and fewer questions would be asked. In short, six to eleven students was large enough to maintain a lively atmosphere but small enough for everyone to be involved. The small size of the groups may also have made it much easier for the tutors to maintain norms, like the turn-taking mentioned above. However, although whole small class activities could maximise interaction and bonding, they also maximised the disruptive effect of any silly behaviour and the tutor needed to maintain firm boundaries with regard to talking in turn, something which I observed both tutors often had to do.

On the other hand, four interviewees (Jack, Karen, Travis, Briony) expressed a preference, at least in some activities, for working in smaller sub-groups. Jack said that small groups were better because some pupils who were less skilled or who did not know what to do would slow everyone else down if the tutor had to stop the whole class to explain things for them. He said he preferred to 'just like split up into groups and go', which implies a (perhaps not very prosocial) impatience with less skilled fellow tutees. The example he gave was tennis and it is possible that, like Travis's reluctance to be partnered in tennis with a girl until he found out she was a good player (see below), sport was a special case for boys; the need to win superseded compassion or the satisfaction that might be gained from helping a less able classmate. With regard to academic work, Jack said that if he was a tutor he would put people in pairs to help each other.

Meanwhile, Karen said in interview that she preferred small groups for a different reason. She liked the fact that her form was small because everyone got a say, but thought it was right that some activities, such as worksheets, were done in even smaller groups, saying groups of two to three were ideal because they give 'you a chance to like, talk to them people in the group'. However, she still wanted the groups to be mixed sex and age (see this section below). Similarly, her tutor, T1, also felt the small size of the form reduced the extent to which strong personalities dominated because it was more intimate

and everyone could be encouraged to have a go. When interviewed, Briony also saw an advantage to bonding in small group activities and even suggested an interesting approach to getting the differently aged tutees to bond with each other. She thought she would begin with fours, made up of, for example two YEAR 8s and two YEAR 7s, to 'see if they start to talk by that' and then try mixed-age pairs 'and see how it works with that'.

Some of the most effective helping activities were also conducted in small groups of two to three. The buddy day grade reviews I observed and heard about all only seemed to work because they were composed of just the few from one year group (see 4.2.2 for more detail). Furthermore, the examples where an older pupil helped or coached a younger one (Glen and Leon, Raul and Ben, a Year 11 and a Year 8 who T1 told me about, some tasks T2 said she partnered pupils together for) seemed to benefit from the focus that a one-to-one relationship allowed. Likewise Paul said in his interview that he felt being buddied with Scott had made a huge difference to his settling into the form and his continuing happiness and success at school. The exception to this success in small group helping activities were Jared and Briony, who just chatted in the peer-teaching activity, probably because they were such close friends.

According to Karweit and Hansell, age segregation in secondary schools for subject classes tends to ensure that close friendships are between same-age pupils (Karweit and Hansell, 1983a). Certainly it means that pupils will spend the vast majority of their day with pupils of a similar age and I had wondered whether this would affect pupils' choice of friends in mixed-age VTGs. When I did my observations, I found that in both forms' tutees in the same year group tended to sit together and this also occurred amongst the pupil-spectators on sports day. However, in both forms these same age groups sat with groups of different ages and a great deal of friendly, informal interaction occurred, sometimes including helping behaviour. Indeed, age did not appear to be a barrier to interaction, either outside or during individual, pair, small group or whole class activities. In both forms I frequently observed pupils of different ages chatting together during activities. For example, when F2 were making jewellery, tutees of all ages chatted freely together and when F1 were writing

their self-reports, Karen chatted with Paul. In Karen's interview she expressed a preference for working with her year or older but she thought it was good to do mixed age activities because 'it is nice if you've got friends in different years…Because they kind of look out for each other'. In his interview, Ben said he did not mind what age he did activities with and when interviewed, Paul thought that mixed age was better too. It is also important to note that I never witnessed any unfriendly or antisocial behaviour, either between pupils of the same or different ages. Jared said in interview that it was the mixed ages rather than the low numbers that made the biggest difference to his form's getting along so well with each other, explaining that it 'leaves you on your own to start with…so to have a chat…you're forced to interact with people you wouldn't really talk to and get along'

According to the pupils and tutors I interviewed, activities played an important part in promoting this (see 4.5.1 for more details). For example, Raul said that the activities provided a good opportunity to have fun with and get to know the younger pupils, suggesting that, at least for some students, interacting with younger students can be a pleasure in itself, perhaps like playing with younger siblings. In which case the quality of the interaction and the relationships they build may depend more on attitude and personality than age. T1's Describing Game and T2's drama games were also good examples of different aged pupils enjoying activities together.

Interestingly, when asked in his interview whether the age difference was very obvious during the mixed age drama games, Leon said that if felt like they were all the same age, because the older pupils participated enthusiastically. However, it is also true that pupils of different ages sometimes had different attitudes to activities and sometimes took on different, age-related roles. T1 and T2 said that the YEAR 11s they had had (who I did not observe because they had left) were unenthusiastic about activities and a negative influence. It is not clear how much this was due to their personalities, their numbers or the fact that they had (as seems to be the case in many schools that adopt VT) been the most anti vertical tutor groups from the beginning because they were the most used to their original HTGs. T1 had had three YEAR 11s who she said were not

'particularly dynamic' while T2 had had five who 'dominated quite often' and who 'were laid back and chilled out…They didn't help to motivate the younger ones to do the activities…sometimes they did things like 'oh, we think this is like childish'. In contrast, according to my observations and interviews, the Year 12-13s always made a very positive contribution to activities, even when, like in the various games or jewellery-making, they might have been considered childish. I think this may have been because, being sixth formers with some 'adult' privileges (such as wearing their own clothes and managing their own time in 'free' periods), they saw themselves more as adults helping children and less as teenagers being forced by an adult (the tutor) to play childish games. Looked at within Bar-Tal and Raviv's framework of five techniques (see 2.4) his may have been an example of the sixth formers developing by being given a responsible role.

Both tutors told me that, from the beginning, they had deliberately mixed up the age groups in activities in order to counteract the reluctance of the Year 11s, as well as to promote bonding. Interestingly, when asked in interviews how they would run activities if they were tutors, two pupils said they would put two people of one year group in a group with two people from another (Jack, Briony). Leon also said in his interview that he would make activities mixed age if he was the tutor. When interviewed, Raul said that the way T2 put them in groups of people they would not normally work with helped them all to get to know each other.

As previously mentioned in 4.2.1, T1 believed that older pupils had a moderating and mind-opening effect on the views of younger students. She put this down to an 'age intelligence thing' and T2 also referred to the difference between older and younger pupils as their 'intelligence level'. I think this reflects differences in cognitive/emotional development, which theorists claim does *tend* to increase with age during childhood and adolescence (Bainbridge, 2009; Eisenberg, 1982b; Eisenberg and Morris, 2004) rather than what might more usually be referred to as IQ, which tends not to (Pinker, 2002). It is presumably this difference which allowed older students who, like Glen, were struggling academically, to give meaningful help to younger ones who, like Raul,

were academically able. This may play a part in the rewards the older students apparently derived from helping. In fact, it seemed that even when older pupils were not very enthusiastic about VT or activities generally, their position as the oldest prompted them to take leadership roles in activities which required someone to take the lead. Raul said that:

Raul (interview): 'Well the one enrichment day where we were all together as a class, like I was saying with the teambuilding, the older ones seemed to – this was when the year 11s were here as well – they were like, they seemed to almost take charge because they were saying what to do and how to do things. Because one of them , one of the enrichment day activities we did, was one where you had think about things, there was a tent where you had to think about what we would need to survive on this island, and the older years were like taking charge like saying we'd need this, we'd need that. So the younger ones do seem to like, they do their own thing and the older ones sit back and watch it, but when we're doing activities, they all sort of take charge really.'

However, it should be noted that, although it was not done very often, T1 said that younger students also responded well to being given leadership roles by the tutor. There was no evidence that older pupils objected when this was done.

There was also some evidence that a wide age gap between partners could promote greater task focus because the differently aged tutees are friendly but not close friends. For example, when I observed the peer-teaching activity in TG2 (see 4.2.6), I saw Raul and Ben, who were both male but shared a two year age gap, get on with the activity as instructed whereas Briony and Jared, who were closer in age and close friends, just chatted.

There were, however, advantages to same age groupings for some activities. The success of Lyndon's help with Jack's behavior in class, instigated by the Buddy Day grade review conducted by T1 with her three YEAR 7 boys (described in detail in 4.2.2) depended on the fact that Lyndon and Jack were the same age and so in the same subject classes. Furthermore, the fact that there were usually only two or three pupils of any one year group in each tutor

group tended to make pupils become quite close to their same-age fellow tutees. Ben and Travis' willingness to share their grades with each other in the Buddy Day session I observed seemed to depend on this closeness, just as their ability to make meaningful comments about each other's work and behaviour in class depended on them being in the same classes. T2 listed 'entertaining all the year groups' as one of the difficulties for the tutor of doing activities in a VTG. She said in interview that it was necessary to differentiate for their different levels of ability and later added that for learning related tasks her tutees tended to work in same age groups. However she also said that, in other activities, the older pupils were 'happy to sit and help or contribute'. This is what I observed in my sessions and it suggests to me that one of the ways activities can be kept interesting for older pupils is to give them a leading or helping role. Based on the evidence about Mike in F1 and Glen and Steve in F2 (see 4.4.7), as well as the YEAR 8s in both forms, this also promotes prosocial behavior. This concurs with what Bar-Tal and Raviv say about the potential of role-playing as a technique for developing helping behaviour.

According to pupils in the focus group, gender did not affect interaction in activities. Karen, Briony and Aaron said that they talked to everyone and this agreed with my observations. In interviews, both Karen and Paul said that if they were tutors they would run mixed sex activities and no one said they wanted single sex activities. In one activity I observed (Buddy Day/In the News on Monday 4) when Briony, Raul and Aaron were going through a newspaper looking for interesting articles, it seemed to me that the two boys in the only mixed sex group controlled the process and that Briony was rather sidelined. However, when I asked her about this in the interview she said that actually she had had an equal say and that the boys had been influenced by her. Incidentally, this was also a good example of how a mixed method approach helped give me a fuller picture of what was occuring in my case study, although it also highlights the limitations of each method: the conclusion I drew from my observation may have misled me, but equally Briony may have been misleading herself about the extent of her participation.

Furthermore, as with mixed age groups, there were advantages in mixed sex groupings in activities. Although T1 felt that some of the girls were sometimes irritated by the silly behaviour of some of the boys, and what Karen said in interview implied confirmation of this, T1 also thought that the presence of girls benefited activities like discussions because it stopped them from being non-stop banter. Similarly, Paul said in interview that mixed sex groups 'tend to socialise better, not only putting boys there and girls there because they'll drift off from the topics'.

I observed many examples of this male 'banter' in TG1 and saw how it could be disruptive in whole class activities. One boy, Ben, had a quick and dry wit, but could also be very immature. According to my observations and what T2 and Karen said in interviews, his voice sometimes dominated whole class discussions and his contributions could derail them. I think this made a case for sometimes having discussions in small, mixed sex groups where personalities like Ben would be less tempted to 'play to the gallery'. In fact, whilst Karen said in interview that she preferred not to work with Ben because he was so loud, T1 felt putting Ben with a girl like Karen would make him more focused because 'he can't just be himself and be silly…because it's just not going to wash'. Unfortunately, I did not have the chance to see this for myself but the data from interviews does suggest that, just as older pupils could have a moderating influence on younger ones, so girls, who tend to mature earlier than boys of the same age (Bainbridge, 2009), can have a moderating influence on boys as long as the nature and group size of the activity does not encourage the boys to play for laughs. During the self-report writing activity in TG1 on Tuesday 2 I noted that, given how much Karen and Shannon wrote and how little Ben and Travis wrote, putting them in mixed pairs might have promoted greater task focus (although, unless the tutor insisted on the boys scribing for the pair, these particular girls may have ended up still doing the writing with these particular boys). The following day I also noted that Jack seemed to lack the maturity to do the 'finding out something new about your partner' sensibly and he may have done better talking to one of the girls, about whom he would also have known less to start with. However there was an exception to the 'mixed-sex equals task-focus' rule. During the peer-teaching activity in TG2 on Wednesday

3, the mixed sex pair of Jared and Briony, who were close friends, just chatted whereas the same sex pair of Raul and Ben, who were friendly but not close, got a much more done. So it may have been the closeness of the friends in the groups, who were usually but not always the same sex, which was the main factor in off-task behavior.

Another advantage of mixed sex activity may have been the potential for girls and boys to learn to relate to each other in a safe, familial environment. None of the interviewees mentioned any romantic feelings between the tutees and I did not detect any sign of this. Of course, it is probably very unlikely that tutees would talk about their romantic feelings to me and extremely likely that they would conceal their feelings in group situations like tutor time. It is also not that unusual for older boys to date younger girls. However, given the family atmosphere I observed and remembering my own awkwardness with members of the opposite sex when I was a teenager, I do wonder whether, for some young people, relationships with members of the opposite sex feel less pressured when there is a large age gap, because expectations of romance might feel reduced. For pupils without opposite sex siblings, this could be a valuable social learning experience.

However, it is also true that young people tend to seek friends of the same sex as well as the same age (Karweit and Hansell, 1983b) and I also found that, as with pupils of the same year group, pupils of the same sex did group together when they had a choice and T3 told me that the boys in TG1 loved doing boys versus girls quizzes, even though they usually lost. In TG1 there were four girls who sat in two pairs and in her interview Karen said that she chose to be with Shannon in activities when she had a choice. In TG2, now that the Year 11s (four of whom had been female) had all left, Briony was the only girl who regularly attended and she tended to sit with Jared. The other girl in TG2, Summer, did not regularly attend and, according to T2, had difficulty with relationships, so it is perhaps not surprising that she and Briony were not close and T2 told me that Summer had become close to one of the Year 11 girls before she had left. On the sports day when Briony could sit with a friend from another tutor group who was the same age and sex, she did. T2 said that she

thought Briony was happy because the boys in her form were very ‘easy-going’ but that she probably felt a bit outnumbered and it would be good when two new girls joined in Year 7. Briony confirmed that this was the case in her interview. T2 said that how well mixed sex pairs worked depended on personality. For example Raul would get on well with Briony but probably less well with Summer.

So, as with mixed age, mixed sex activities appeared to have a positive impact on task focus and behaviour which was recognised and appreciated by pupils as well as tutors, even though the former chose to be with their same sex friends when they could. However, perhaps the exception which proves the rule and the best example of the potential prosocial benefits of tutor-forced mixed sex grouping is the one described by T1, in which Travis was very reluctant to be partnered with a girl in a tennis doubles match but, according to T1 ‘bonded’ with her once they started winning.

Individual personality sometimes had a strong bearing on tutees’ behaviour during activities. Although my first observations in TG1 suggested that the boys were rather loud and the girls were very quiet, further observations when another girl was present made it clear that it was just one boy, Ben, who was particularly loud (see this section above) and there was one girl, Tracey, who was very outgoing and also said a great deal. There were tutees of both sexes who were quite quiet, though all were observed contributing at different times, and most pupils were somewhere in between.

Personality also seemed to affect pupils’ capabilities and success in certain prosocial behaviours. In interview, Jack put improvement in his behaviour down to the calming influence of Lyndon, who was not like ‘all the bad people’ he used to sit with. Meanwhile T1 said that Travis, who was quite quiet in class, excelled in more physical team activities, such as sports or the fashion show, where he was good at organizing and motivating. When I asked Travis about this in his interview he said that it was because he just enjoyed sports and competition. T1 said she also found that personality affected general compliance:

T1 (interview): ‘some students will do whatever you tell them to do and get on with it and value it, whereas some…’

Unsurprisingly, personality affected preferences for partners. Karen said that if she had to work with a boy it would be Paul, because he was easier to talk to due to the fact that he listened rather than just talked about himself all the time. Sadly, some students’ personalities or personal issues made it more difficult for them to fit in. T2 told me that Summer ‘sort of isolated herself’ but also engaged in disruptive attention-seeking behaviour, and Leon told me in interview that he thought the others probably did not trust him very much because he mucked about a lot. Jared also said in interview that he and another pupil with whom he had never got on had had to be separated once. During her interview, Briony confided that she was not very good at talking to people. Interestingly, according to T2, all three had benefitted socially from relationships with students of other ages (Summer with one of the Year 11 girls, Leon with Glen and Briony with Jared). Meanwhile T2 said that Scott, whose wider than average general knowledge meant that he had a bit of a ‘nerdy’ image, got on well with and was valued by Paul, who seemed to have a greater than average appreciation of knowledge and academic ability.

In thirteen of the twenty-one activities I observed, choice of group was irrelevant because the activities were whole class. In the seven that weren’t, pupils were allowed to choose their partner in three of them but were told who to work with or to work individually, by the tutor in four. I never saw pupils complain about being told to work with someone but I did see Jared trying to sit with Briony rather than work individually during the research phase of In the News on Friday 3. Despite differences in personality and age and the affect that had on the preferences pupils expressed, and despite the fact that many interviewees said they preferred being allowed to choose who they sat and/or worked with (Jack, Karen, Travis, Briony), many interviewees also agreed with a degee of enforced mixing through activities (Jack, Karen, Jared, Briony, Leon, Raul, Paul, Ben). Furthermore, pupils in the focus group felt that whole class drama

activities and games, which forced everyone to interact, helped people to get to know each other (Karen, Ben, Aaron).

Both tutors described purposely mixing the pupils up to force them to interact (T1 gave the example of 'Fruit Salad' and the fashion show) and/or create groups with balanced abilities (T2 cited quizzes as an example). However, the two tutors took different approaches with regard to seating plans. T1, whose tutor group were based in her classroom where the desks were set out in rows, said she had had a seating plan for most of the year, but that recently she had let it lapse and the back row had 'mixed themselves up a bit'. Meanwhile T2, whose tutor group were based in the music technology room, allowed her tutees to sit where they liked around a large central island of desks (see Appendix 4). In this arrangement, no matter who a tutee sat next to, they had 'to be looking or communicating in some way with the other people around the table'. This meant that they were 'not just fixed on this person…next to them' and 'when they say something, they can be heard by everybody'. From my observations in both tutor groups I would say that there were more frequent, spontaneous interactions between different tutees in TG2 than in TG1 where, although there was a significant amount of interaction between rows, the majority of interaction was between pupils on the same row of desks. Because, at the time when I observed them, the pupils on each row in F1 were pupils who were friends anyway, it is impossible to know the extent to which this was due to the layout or friendships, but I noted on Monday 1 that there was little sense that it was a discussion across the whole tutor group between tutees, more between each the tutor and each tutee in turn and that this might have been due to the lack of eye contact (although on other days I did observe pupils turning round to talk or respond to the people behind them). TG2's 'boardroom' arrangement appeared to promote positive interaction, without being disrupted by any more off-task chat or calling out than in TG1.

Something I looked for in my case study was examples of pupils being assigned or taking different roles, especially leadership ones. However, in thirteen out of twenty observed activities the pupils all had the same role: participant in the activity. In four activities roles rotated equally, for example

interviewer/interviewee in talking about achievements. In one, the peer-teaching activity on Wednesday, each pair was meant to alternate between teacher and learner but there was not enough time, while in the describing game some pupils won the chance to take a turn as the describer by guessing the identity of the person being described. In all the activities I observed in both tutor groups, the tutors took the leading role from beginning to end. They were particularly prominent in the whole class activities and, as previously mentioned, sometimes discussions in TG1 were more a case of the pupils interacting one by one with the tutor than with each other. According to interviewees however, tutors did sometimes assign pupils leadership or helping roles - for example Travis organising the fashion show and Glen helping Leon - and pupils did sometimes take the lead on their own initiative - for example Mike in TG1 and the Year 11-13s in the teambuilding activities in TG2. The work of pupil leaders/helpers and the opportunity for personal development afforded by these roles were highly valued and four pupils in the focus group wanted more opportunities (Ben, Mario, Aaron, Leon). However, I did get the sense that role-assignment and role taking were relatively infrequent and this was probably partly due to the fact that, as previously stated, most activities were whole class and led by the tutor. Given that the activities in which pupils took a more prominent leadership role were the longer ones, such as on enrichment days and ongoing relationships like Glen mentoring Leon, it is probably the relative lack of time in the twenty-five minute tutorial sessions that forced the tutors to lead. Increasing the opportunities for pupils to lead and so develop their capacity for prosocial behaviour may then require the tutors to set up long term projects in which everyone know what they have to do but which can be done over a number of short sessions.

Both tutors frequently encouraged their tutees to participate in activities, be positive about themselves and prosocial towards each other. All the pupils I interviewed had a high regard for their tutors and it seemed that they effectively modelled the prosocial values and behaviour they expected from their tutees. Interestingly, the most explicit appreciation of this was expressed by two of the least compliant pupils, Ben in TG1 and Leon in TG2. This would appear to be

an example of the tutors promoting prosocial behaviour through the technique Bar-Tal and Raviv defined as *modelling*.

4.3.4 Theme and content

Several pupils said that the extent to which 'In the News' engaged them depended on how interesting the news was that day. There was also some evidence that what interested different pupils varied. Ben and Leon showed an interest in stories about violence whilst Karen and Briony seemed to be put off by it. Whether or not most boys and girls would conform to the social stereotypes of boys liking violent topics and girls not, in her interview Karen said this was one of the obstacles to her developing a close bond with boys like Ben. On the other hand, according to T1, discussions about controversial topics provided opportunities for tutees' minds to be opened, and preconceptions and prejudices to be challenged, with the result that they adopted more nuanced or compassionate views of people in need (see 4.2.1). One example I observed was TG1 discussing the story of a girl who had illegally immigrated to the UK because she was being forced into an arranged marriage in her home country. At the end Ben, who at the beginning had expressed an unsympathetic view of illegal immigrants as a whole, said he could see why the girl felt she had to illegally immigrate to the UK and expressed some empathy for her situation. Finding news stories that would stimulate widespread discussion seemed to be a mixture of the tutor using her experience of her group and some luck. A reliable theme in TG1 seemed to be the pupils themselves. T1 commented several times that her tutees were fascinated by anything that was about them, and that this was why the Buddy Day grade reviews and the Describing Game were successful.

4.3.2 Resources

Although it is stating the obvious to say that the available resources affected the activities which could be done, they sometimes affected the prosocial potential of activities in less obvious ways. For example, I saw that T2's unrestricted access to the drama studio allowed her to do the highly interactive and physically mobile drama games which helped to bond the pupils. Likewise it

was the size and layout of the music technology room, which happened to be her tutor group's base, which allowed her to seat her tutees around a central table, which T2 said benefited their bonding and informal helping. However this room had huge windows so it got very hot, irritating some of the more irritable tutees, and the lack of blinds made the interactive whiteboard impossible to see. Because of this and because there were lots of individual computers around the wall, the In the News activity tended to be done mostly as individual research followed by a very brief reporting back to the whole form. This limited the extent to which discussion and prosocial views could be developed. In contrast, TG1's room was smaller and crowded with desks which were set out in rows for the purposes of T1's lessons. However, her interactive whiteboard was easy for all to see, so it was relatively easy for T1 to work on her tutees' compassion with whole class discussions about controversial topics but relatively hard to break down the barriers between some groups and work on their teamwork with dynamic physical activities. The resource which both tutors commented on the lack of was time and in some activities (peer-teaching, the Buddy Day grade review and In the News) a large proportion of pupils did not get a turn to contribute fully, which must have limited any effect on their prosociality.

4.3.3 Level of difficulty and challenge

Based on my interpretation of how difficult the main activity appeared to be for the focal pupil in each session, and of how effectively they performed on that occasion, I tried to make an assessment of how challenging each activity was (see Appendix 1). The activities in TG2 appeared to be generally more challenging than those in TG1. For both tutor groups, the more active games (the Describing Game and the drama games) seemed to be more challenging than the discussions. However, I could perceive no connection between this level of challenge and the degree of prosocial cognitive development or prosocial behaviour, and none of my participants reported anything which suggested a connection, except that several students reported in interview that their feeling of a bond with their fellow tutees was facilitated by being *forced* (the word was used several times) to interact with people they would not normally have interacted with, especially those from other years or the opposite

sex. Although this does not necessarily imply that to work with someone unfamiliar or even previously disliked is cognitively challenging, it does imply that doing so is an emotional stretch. It must be noted that some of the girls in TG1 still did not want to work with some of the boys and had been further put off by their experience in the activities.

4.4 Examples of prosocial behaviour and the possible influence of activities on them

It is sensible to presume that no specific example of spontaneous prosocial behaviour by pupils can be directly connected to any one specific structured activity. Any prosocial action may be the result of the collective effect of many influences, including the prosocial actor's own good nature. I have therefore analysed my data not only from the point of view of the individual activities and any apparent connection to the promotion of prosocial behaviour, but also from the other way around: I have looked at different aspects of prosocial behaviour and asked which activities may have played a part in promoting them. These examples of prosocial behavior may vary from major incidents which pupils and tutors are likely to remember and describe to the researcher in detail, and minor acts, which are easily forgotten but nevertheless play an important, cumulative role in the promotion of a generally prosocial school.

4.4.1 Helping with schoolwork

One of the things I looked for In this case study but did not find in either tutor group was examples of older pupils helping younger ones with schoolwork. Neither did I observe any examples of tutees directly teaching each other academic subjects (as opposed to the more general review of grades and work in class which took place on the TG1 Buddy Day, which seemed more focused on attitudes), either spontaneously or as part of a planned activity. T1 said she was sure they had done activities like that but she could not think of any examples and although Paul said that, during the buddying they had done, 'the bright one may offer help to the other one so that they can boost up their grades', he could not give any specific examples. None of the other pupils or T2

mentioned any examples either, so it would seem that planned academic peer-teaching activities occur at most very occasionally and have not made a deep impression.

The help that was reported by interviewees to have taken place was all between same-age peers. In TG1, Ben said in interview that he had helped Travis with homework one day but could not remember any more details. During his interview, Jack said that he and the other two Year 7 boys helped each other with homework sometimes, and that he had seen Ben and Travis helping each other. Paul said in interview that he and Scott sometimes helped each other. Most of the pupils who were asked in interview about who they would go to with a schoolwork problem said they would go to the teacher who set it or a same-age friend (Jack, Paul, Travis, Briony). In their interviews, Ben and Jared said they would go to an older tutee if they needed help but it was not something they had done. Briony even said that she would go to her Year 10 friends (who were in other forms) if she needed help, but if they could not help she would ask Jared or Raul, who were a year younger but, she thought, close enough in age and more importantly it seems, close friends. Paul said that he sometimes felt more comfortable asking a friend than a teacher:

Paul (interview): 'if a student is there you are free, you see him as a friends and they can help you understand some things'.

However, all his examples of asking for and giving help with schoolwork were with same-age peers in the tutor group.

The reason for the lack of cross-age help with schoolwork may have been because all the structured activities in which pupils had helped each other with academic issues had been done in pairs or small groups of the same-age peers in each tutor group (see 4.2.2). T1's buddying activities had all been same-age and T2 also said that when her tutees did tasks with a partner, it was in same age groups. Therefore there was no organised precedant for cross-age help with academic work.

Some of the interview data does suggest that there is the potential for older pupils to help younger ones if the latter asked. Raul said he would help someone with their homework if they asked him to, Jared said he thought Glen and Steve would help if asked and I never came across any evidence of anyone refusing to help anyone with anything. However it seems that structured activities would be necessary to initiate this and Raul even suggested something like this (see 4.2.6).

4.4.2 Helping other pupils with activities

Not counting Enrichment Day activities in which pupils were meant to work together and the older pupils sometimes assumed a leadership role, (see 4.2.7), there were two examples of older pupils helping younger ones during activities. In TG1 I observed Mike explaining The Describing Game to a Year 7 boy who and in TG2, when Leon and Raul were struggling with the jewellery-making, I observed Glen encouraging them and showing them what he had done.

Briony confirmed in interview that older tutees sometimes helped younger ones but said it depended on the activity, saying she thought sometimes they just thought 'right I'm the oldest I kind of have to be responsible'. In both the examples above, the older pupil was in close proximity to the younger ones, who expressed frustration rather than asked for help, and this was overheard by the older one. These are further cases of planned activities providing a context in which help is needed and a source of help is close at hand, and the importance of this is further discussed in 4.5.2.

4.4.3 Helping to stop bullying

I asked all of the interviewees about bullying and they did not report any cases between tutees. All of them felt that everyone got on well so it seems unlikely that it would occur. However, there had been a few cases of bullying occurring outside the tutor group and there was at least one specific example of an older pupil intervening on behalf of a younger one. When I asked Karen about whether tutees looked out for each other she said that when Tracey had been 'not getting along' with someone outside the tutor group, Mike 'was sticking up

for' her. She thought anyone in the tutor group would do that for a fellow tutee. However, she did not think this was anything to do with the activities but more to do with the small size of the form and the fact that they all knew each other very well.

Paul said that when he had occasionally seen Year 7s being picked on in the corridor he had stepped in and 'gone with' the victim (presumably to a member of staff). However, in the case of the two pupils I interviewed who had direct experience of being bullied, Raul and Leon, the bullying had not stopped until teachers had intervened (although Raul said that some of his same-age friends had stuck up for him). T2 told me that she had once noticed that Aaron was unhappy and that when she had asked him why, he had said that some of the people in his friendship group had begun to isolate him. T2 had then spoken to Aaron's fellow Year 8 tutee, Gavin, and asked him to use his influence on the group. Gavin did this and the problem was resolved, but it seems that he would not have taken this action without her prompting. Interestingly, when I interviewed Jared about what he would do if a fellow tutee was being bullied, he said that he would tell his tutor 'but I wouldn't really know what to do about it'.

4.4.4 Acting to include an outsider

The only examples of activities being linked directly to tutees taking action to include an outsider were the birthday party in TG2 (discussed in 4.2.4) in which one pupil insisted I have some cake and the assignment of Scott to buddy Paul when he joined see (4.2.8). However, there were inclusive actions with no explicit link to an activity but a clear link to a background of interaction in tutor time, unarguably including activities. In their interviews, both Jack, Jared and Leon reported that much older boys (Year 11-13s) from their tutor groups would say hello and chat to them when they bumped into each other outside school, even when the older pupils were with their older friendship groups. All three appreciated this contact. In addition, T2 described how Summer, who did not generally mix well with other children, had begun to talk to the group of Year 11 girls (who had left shortly before I did my observations). T2 implied that the Year 11 girls had accepted Summer, and she had been willing to be accepted, after

they got to know each other through the tutor time activities, which T2 insisted were always in mixed age groups.

4.4.5 Helping with personal problems

Apart from the help that Glen gave to Leon, which is discussed in detail below in 4.4.7, four interviewees (Karen, Briony, Paul and Travis) reported that pupils had helped or been helped with personal problems by fellow tutees. Of these the two girls gave the most detail.

Karen said that a Year 11 girl who she had become friends with in her tutor group had helped her with personal problems related to 'friendships and stuff'. She thought that this would not have happened without the mixed year tutor groups but did not credit any particular activities, so whilst their relationship may well have been generally facilitated by the bonding activities, simply being in the same tutor group may have been enough. Karen also said that Tracey always came to her for help with personal problems, but she said they had been friends since primary school so neither the vertical tutoring nor the activities within it were necessary to initiate or sustain this.

Meanwhile, Briony said in interview that if she was down Jared would usually ask her if she was OK and gave a specific example of when she had been annoyed about one of her teachers and he had talked to her and made her feel better. As described in 4.5.1, this relationship may have been facilitated by the bonding activities.

For the boys, Paul did not give any specific examples in his interview but said that when tutees in TG1 looked unhappy, one of the others would ask them if they were alright. Similarly, Travis could not remember any details in his interview but thought he had helped same-age tutees with personal problems by having 'a little chat' and said he had been helped in the same way.

4.4.6 Helping another pupil with making choices

Only one pupil reported helping another with making an important choice. This was Briony, who said:

Briony (interview): 'I did help Jared, he was a bit confused with what options to choose so I was kind of like talking to him and I was like well what do you want to be when you grow up, do you think this is going to help you, and it kind of did help him because he was kind of like, well this will help and he was a bit like, I don't know if I'm going to do this or not and I said go for it and now he's actually thinking, yeah this will actually help me and it will work'

She said this was not part of an activity, just a 'random conversation'. However, given that she was by her own admission very shy and that she, Jared and T2 all felt that the activities they did helped the two of them to become friends, the bonding activities done in tutor time could claim some credit for making such informal conversations possible.

It is also possible that activities focused on older tutees sharing their experiences of different GCSE and A Level subjects with their younger classmates, may facilitate this further. T1 said she thought that they had done such things but could not remember specific details.

4.4.7 Helping with behaviour and assisting the tutor

The worst behaviour I saw during my observations was pupils messing about with things in their form room when they should not have been, not following instructions to settle down or get on with a task, very occasional swearing and one boy from another tutor group who wanted to come in to TG2 and hung around after T2 had asked him to go. In my professional opinion then, the behaviour in both tutor groups, with or without the tutor present, was good. Furthermore, based on interviews with pupils and tutors as well as the focus group, it seems that behaviour in tutor time was generally better than behaviour outside it. Part of the reason for this may have been the prosocial interventions by older pupils in the behaviour of younger ones, which was also the most

noticeable way in which tutees directly supported their tutor. I have therefore analysed helping with behaviour and assisting the tutor together.

Interestingly, as soon as the trespassing boy from another tutor group ignored T2's instruction to go, I observed Glen calmly say '[NAME], go mate' and the boy left immediately. This was obviously not part of an activity but T2 told me that, at the start of the year, Glen had been asked to take Leon, who had some behavioural issues, 'under his wing'. As a result, she said, 'Leon has settled down a lot'. This was therefore a planned (if ongoing and very loosely structured) activity which promoted prosocial behavior by the helper, and perhaps promoted the conditions for further prosocial behavior by establishing Glen in this role. Jared and Briony also said in their interviews that Glen, and sometimes Steve (another Year 12) and the Year 11s, generally intervened when any of the younger pupils messed about. I observed this again when, at the end of one session in which T2 felt that her form had not been very compliant, she thanked Glen for his support in moderating their behaviour, saying 'Glen had my back today'. Although these examples were spontaneous acts, it suggests that the technique Bar-Tal and Raviv defined as *role-playing*, especially for older students, may be effective (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982).

In TG2 it was not only the Year 11-13s who tried to intervene in the misbehavior of younger pupils. In his interview, Raul said that if the older pupils were not there then he, Jared and Briony would tell the Year 7-8s to stop messing about. He said that the younger pupils would not obey them in the way they would the Year 11-13s, but it signifies something that these Year 9-10s tried anyway. In fact I saw Raul and Briony do this the very next day when I observed them intervening to tell Leon and Ben to stop messing about with an electric piano before T2 arrived. Leon ignored Raul but Raul did not give up and actually tried to turn the piano off. I was present so I do not know whether that had any influence but it lends support to what he said in the interview (see also 3.6.3).

Other ways in which tutees assisted their tutor were taking the register (already analysed in 4.2.11) helping with computers and running errands. Jack said in interview that sometimes when T1 did not know how to do something 'the older

ones would do it for her' and they were 'like quite caring and that'. So although these prosocial actions were not planned activities in themselves, the need for the pupils to act arose directly from the activities. As we shall see in 4.5.2, need is a vital ingredient in the promotion of prosocial behavior. When, as mentioned in 4.2.4, T2 described Aaron as her 'wingman' - always eager to run errands for her - she admitted that his role was not part of any structured activity but her needs provided an opportunity for him to assume a prosocial role he wanted anyway

4.4.8 Working together

T1 was sure that the teambuilding activities in which tutees of different ages were grouped together were vital in overcoming some of the older pupils' hostile attitudes to VT and getting all tutees to work together:

'The Year 11s and the Year 10s were very anti it. The first thing they did was question like, why are we here? Why are we in this group? What are we doing? So you had to do…we did loads and loads and loads of team building things, at the beginning, and just fun activities to get them together interacting with each other, and then just sort of talking to each other, helping each other. In fact one of the lads who was a real, real pain, actually came back in today to see us'

T1 also told a story about how, during the inter-house mixed doubles tennis competition, Travis had been determined not to be partnered with a girl but that once he had been persuaded to play with her he actually began to enjoy it:

'Well I kept saying "Katie is really good", you can see a mile off that she's been coached, and she's really good, but he didn't want to do it. He did it… they were fine once they got going…and then it was funny because then they got the camaraderie together. They were a pair and they played one game and they won it.'

This resonates with what four other pupils [Jared, Raul, Ben, Briony] said in interviews about being made to work with people they would not normally have chosen to work with.

4.4.9 General care and consideration for others

As well as Glen's tutor-organised help for Leon (see 4.4.7), Jared told me in his interview that Glen generally looked out for both Year 7 boys (Leon and Ben), and had done the same for Gavin and Aaron when they were in Year 7. The fact that Glen 'looked out for' Year 7 boys before Leon joined suggests that he was already predisposed to give general help to new students. Furthermore, in the focus group both Ben and an unidentifiable male voice said that older pupils, from YEAR 8 up, generally 'get to know you and sort of like help' Year 7s, and Ben confirmed this. However, the pupils in the focus group also mentioned the activity in which Year 8s were assigned to help new Year 7s when they first arrived and it is possible that this activity encouraged the general culture of helping younger students.

In addition, the vertical nature of the tutor groups provides informal opportunities for older pupils to be helpful. In one session with TG1 I observed T1 talking to Bradley about a test he was going to have to do. Tracey, who, being older but with similar problems had also done the test, joined in the conversation and reassured him that it was nothing to worry about.

4.4.10 Sharing and lending things

Only two interviewees mentioned sharing or lending things as something they did to help others. Jack said that he and one of the other YEAR 7 boys lent each other money to buy food at lunch and break but they were friends and this seems like the kind of behaviour that would occur regardless of tutor time activities. Paul mentioned lending pencils and pens to people who needed them but there was no evidence of any direct connection to any activity.

4.4.11 Helping in an emergency

There were no reports of any helping during emergencies, or indeed of any emergencies when any help would have been required. Leon told me that when he had been in Y6, one of his friends had broken his arm in the park and that he had phoned for the ambulance. Although this was before he joined School A it perhaps suggests that even relatively young children can be quick to help friends and that perhaps one of the keys to increasing prosocial behaviour is to increase the number of people whom they regard as friends, so that if something happens they feel an obligation to help.

4.5 Examples of prosocial conditions and the influence of activities on them

At the beginning of my research, I expected that I might find that certain 'prosocial conditions' might promote actual prosocial behaviour. For instance, an older pupil may see a younger pupil he knows well in distress and, because he has a bond with her, offer help. This is a concrete example of prosocial behaviour but its occurrence in this case depends on the pre-existing condition of the bond between the two pupils. Therefore I wanted my research to be sensitive to detecting the general conditions for prosocial behaviour to occur and the extent to which pupils and tutors thought activities promoted them.

4.5.1 Getting to know each other

The data I collected suggested that tutees getting to know each other was the most significant factor in the promotion of prosocial behaviour.

When I asked pupils which activities helped them get to know each other, all favoured the livelier group activities involving 'games and teamwork' (Aaron and Ben in the focus group). In interview, Paul thought that the competitive team activities like quizzes made people 'more social' because they had to share general knowledge and discuss answers. Based on what I observed and what Jared and Raul said in interview I also think that there was a link between the highly enjoyable activities, such as The Describing Game and the drama games, and the inclusive nature of the tutor group. I think this may be because pupils

who have fun doing an activity might associate the fun with the people they did it with as well as the activity itself. Likewise, T1 and T2 thought that ice-breaking games and activities like 'Fruit Salad', the drama games and the character profiles were very effective at getting pupils to introduce themselves and have fun at the same time. However, when asked how these activities helped them to get to know each other it seemed that the most significant factor was the informal conversation the activities stimulated and the gradual accumulation of knowledge about each other, starting with something as simple as the necessity of having to know and use each other's names to do an activity. In the focus group, Ben explained that:

Ben (focus group): 'you've got to call their names to get them over, sort of. It sort of bonds them, so you know who they are…you'll like doing things together. You get to know what they do in their life, stuff like that.'

In that focus group Karen added that 'You just start talking to each other, when you're doing things', and in her interview she explained how simply being put into groups with different people led to bonds being formed:

Karen (interview): 'when we get paired in groups, usually we don't pick, so if we in a group, then, like we'll be close to them because we'll start talking to them people more'

Given these feelings, it was unsurprising when Ben said in his interview that it was the teambuilding activities on the enrichment days that most helped people to get to know each other, presumably because the activities were longer so the pupils spent more time together but also perhaps because activities like fashion shows and group obstacle courses demanded more teamwork, whereas in discussions or the Describing Game it was possible for a pupil to sit back and be less involved if they wished. Furthermore, with only one exception, all the evidence I found indicated that age-peers in tutor groups were quite close to each other. The small numbers of each year group in each form appeared to automatically create a bond between them.

What was surprising was that despite their preference for choosing who to sit or do activities with, pupils appreciated the necessity and benefits of compulsion. For example, in interview Jared said that being 'forced to interact' with new people:

Jared (interview): 'can be a bit frustrating at the beginning because you don't really, sometimes you don't really like the people, you wouldn't really talk to them at all, but after you get to know them it's quite good.'

Altogether, pupils did appear to know their fellow tutees very well and to generally get along well. In both tutor groups, but particularly in TG1, I observed almost continuous friendly informal interaction across the whole age range and both sexes, from Tracey discussing a subject they both did with Lyndon to Paul and Jack bantering playfully like boisterous siblings. In the focus group, Aaron said that the YEAR 7s already 'knew everybody' after one year and said that he never minded being moved to work with other people because 'we all get along'. In the interviews, most of the pupils (Ben, Jack, Karen, Paul, Travis, Leon, Briony) said that everyone knew each other and got on well. Paul said the form had a 'family-like relationship', while Briony and Karen talked about how people would be tolerant and friendly even when they were not close friends. Even the pupils who, for specific reasons, were not good at making friends, like Rob in TG1 and Summer in TG2, were accommodated and treated with respect.

It also seemed that this bonding was durable and had a positive effect beyond individual tutor groups and across the whole school. In TG1, two pupils who had left the school came back to visit (Mike and an ex-YEAR 11) and T2 thought that the mixed age friendships in tutor groups had actually had a cohesive effect on the whole school community, saying 'it brings them [the whole school] a bit closer together. There's not these clear divides like there used to be'.

Trust also appeared to develop as pupils got to know each other, although deep trust required close friendship. Every interviewee who explained how trust was built attributed it to knowing the other pupils for a long time, with close friends of

long acquaintance being the most trusted (Paul, Jack, Karen, Jared, Briony, Raul). Paul explained that trust in close friends 'builds up, slowly by slowly' as the friends demonstrate that they are 'there for' each other. Leon's rather poignant confession that he thought his classmates probably did not trust him very much 'because I mess around. A little bit' suggests that it is everyday behaviour during interaction which tends to shape these tutees' relationships with one another, more than any particular structured activity which took place at this school. The structured activities only seem to have built trust indirectly as a result of helping the pupils get to know each other and develop some close friendships.

Interviewees qualified the degree to which they would trust their fellow tutees in a way that they never qualified whether or not they would help them. When asked how much they trusted their fellow tutees, three of the nine pupils interviewed said they trusted all their fellow tutees 'quite far' (Ben, Jack, Paul), two with things like looking after property (Jared, Leon) and one with passing on messages (Briony). Only Raul explicitly said that he would not trust some of his fellow tutees with property. The pupils were, perhaps not surprisingly, more circumspect about who they would trust with personal information, always limiting that to close friends. The two girls I interviewed seemed to have the most limits on who they would trust and with what, and these limitations were all focused on who could not be trusted to know or keep personal secrets, although Jared also said that he would be careful because some in his form were gossips. Karen said that she did not trust the 'people that are louder and that tell just stuff all the time' and felt that she was trusted by the other YEAR 8 girls because she had a reputation for keeping secrets. Briony said she would not share very personal information with anyone in the form.

Levels of trust based on the closeness of friendships seemed to affect pupils' willingness to go to their peers for help. It was interesting that Karen said that if she had to go to a boy for help it would be Paul, who was two year groups above her, because he was 'a good mate'. When I probed as to why he was a good mate she explained that it was because he listened whereas the other boys just talked about themselves all the time. However, the fact that pupils

appeared willing to help fellow tutees even if they weren't one of their close and trusted friends suggests that the sibling-like bond created a sense of responsibility towards the whole group.

Although none of the activities were explicitly linked to the development of trust, trust was important to the viability of at least one helping activity. After I had observed Travis and Ben discussing their grades with T1, I asked Travis in his interview if he minded anyone else seeing his grades. He replied 'no, just Ben.' In the final analysis it seems to me that whilst one pupil knowing another as a member of their form was sufficient to motivate them to help, close friendship was required for a pupil to ask for help if doing so might leave them vulnerable.

The data from three interviewees (Karen, Paul and Jack) strongly indicates that the familiarity created in the vertical tutor groups led to prosocial behavior beyond simple fellowship. Karen and Jack both said that people knowing each other led to people looking out for each other, Karen giving the example of Mike sticking up for Tracey (see 4.4.3) simply because she was in his form. When asked whether she thought Mike intervened on Tracey's behalf because he was a big Year 11 and she was a little Year 8, Karen replied no, she thought anyone would do it for anyone. Jack said in interview that he would stick up for someone if he knew them.

In conclusion, despite the range of ages and personalities, the pupils in both tutor groups knew each other very well and this seemed to be enough to give them a bond. Like members of a family they made an effort to be nice to each other and, although some members were irritated by things the others did, the bond and the willingness to help each other remained.

4.5.2 Activities creating opportunities for helping

Arguably, every activity – indeed every tutorial session – created the opportunity for prosocial behaviour by putting pupils in a social situation where they could be friendly and inclusive. However, only two of the twenty-one activities I observed ensured the opportunity for pupils to help each other by

making that their main aim (the Buddy Day grade review and the peer teaching activity – see 4.2.2 and 4.2.6). Meanwhile, one of the drama games, The Chair Game (see Appendix 4), required silent cooperation in order to defeat whoever was 'it' and according to the interviewees, some of the Enrichment Day activities required cooperation and direction from the older pupils to complete. Most of the others created unplanned opportunities, for example when Mike explained to Bradley how to play The Describing Game, Glen helping other pupils in the jewellery-making and Karen suggesting achievements Shannon could put in her self-report (see 4.2.3, 4.2.6 and 4.2.1). What seemed to be necessary for an unplanned opportunity for helping to occur was:

1. Close enough proximity for one pupil to see/hear that another needed help.

2. The freedom to communicate, so that the need for help could be communicated, directly or indirectly (eg. Bradley saying 'I don't get it' in The Describing Game) and so that help could be given.

3. The activity being sufficiently challenging for one pupil to need help or at least a contribution from someone else.

4. The activity being such that another pupil either had enough knowledge or ability to help in this case (for example Mike in the Describing Game), or such that 'two heads are better than one' and another's imagination or point of view was helpful (for example Karen suggesting things that Shannon had achieved).

It would seem then that demanding, whole class, mixed age activities, like jewellery making and The Describing Game, in which pupils are in proximity to and able to interact with a lot of pupils with different levels of knowledge and skill, are the ones most likely to generate unplanned opportunities for help. Same-age pair activities, like talking about achievements, can generate opportunities for help but are limited by the number of people involved and their similar level. Discurssive activities like In the News created no examples of

unplanned help, perhaps because they only required opinions to be expressed rather than a game to be played or something to be completed.

4.5.3 A sense of responsibility, the ability to help and age

I decided to analyse the development of a sense of responsibility and the development of ability to help together because I found them to be inextricably linked together by one factor: relative age.

All the pupils I interviewed said they felt a degree of responsibility for helping their fellow tutees and all but the Year 7s gave examples of when they had helped fellow tutees (although in Ben and Karen's cases the helpees were their close friends so a sense of responsibility was probably not the motivating emotion). However, none of them made or implied any link between any activity and the development of a sense of responsibility. Instead it came from knowing each other (they felt responsible for helping someone if they were in their tutor group) and in particular being older than the person who needed help.

Similarly, with the exception of personal problems (which interviewees said they would always take to close friends), it was to older people that younger ones would go for help, because they were perceived as more competent. For instance, when interviewed Jared said he would go to one of the sixth formers, Glen or Steve, if he had a problem with homework or bullying. Similarly, Leon said that for help with his behavioural problems he would definitely go to Glen and explained why:

Leon (interview): …he was nice. And he just wanted to help me, 'cause he said he used to be like me. He was pretty much in the same situations, and helping me out really.
GB: Do you think other people could be helped by things like that?
Leon: Yeah.
GB: Do you think it has to be someone as old as Glen, or could it be like a Year 11, or…
Leon: Well someone older, or same age even. Or just a year above. Anyone

who helps, it doesn't really matter, just like older, with more experience.

Leon seemed to associate age with experience to some degree but Glen's claim to personal experience seems to have been especially important in qualifying him as a helper in Leon' eyes. The use of a personal anecdote suggests that Glen may have thought about how he was going to win Leon's trust and influence him to change. T2 told me that Glen's mother was a foster parent and so Glen was used to quickly forming relationships with young children. She added that:

T2 (interview): 'he [Glen] is very respectful. He is very polite, you can have a decent mature conversation, and I think in that respect, Leon understands. So he can say to Leon, you know, don't do that. What are you doing, mate? And he talks to him on a level Leon can understand and I think Leon looks up to him as sort of an older brother type situation.'

Planned activities cannot make pupils older but they do provide opportunities to apply experience, gain more and advertise their experience to other pupils (when interviewed, Jared commented on and approved of Glen's help for Leon, and this may have influenced his choice of Glen as one of the people he would go to if he had some kinds of problem). Although Glen's age and home experience seemed to be the foundation of his competence in helping Leon, nevertheless tutor time, including the activities within it, provided daily opportunities for pupils like him to use that competence in a prosocial way, certainly benefiting Leon and perhaps increasing Glen's competence. As described in 4.4.7, Glen's competence in managing the behavior of younger children enabled him to assist his tutor in this area and T2 did make use of this.

I only saw Steve in TG2, and Mike in TG1 once each but from what I observed, and from what was said by both tutors and all of the pupil interviewees who commented, (Jared, Leon, Raul and Karen) both of these sixth form boys played a prosocial role in their tutor groups. Certainly in the eyes of the tutors, this contributed to the promotion of prosocial behaviour in the whole tutor group. As well as the example of Glen supporting T2, T1 said that (as previously

discussed in 4.2.1) the views of her oldest tutee, Mike, carried great weight with the others because of their respect for him and, she thought, the fact that he was still one of them, not a teacher. Just as Glen's competence seemed to have come largely from his home experience but must have been inter-twined with his personality, the degree to which Mike's status as the oldest tutee played a part in that respect is hard to separate from the part played by his personality. In the session when I observed Mike he came across as lively, confident, down to earth and quick-witted – the sort of person who could inspire respect in other people. Not all sixth formers I have known in my career have been like that and I can easily imagine that Mike would have similar status and respect amongst a group of people his own age. However, if there were two Mikes – one in YEAR 9 and one in Y12 – I wonder which would have been the most influential? It seems possible that being significantly older and more experienced enhances a young person's competence by adding seniority to whatever competencies they have. So if a sixth former in a VTG is confident and quick-witted, he or she is likely to be the most confident and quick-witted tutee because those qualities have had longer to develop than they have in a younger confident and quick-witted individual. Furthermore, within schools, age, especially for sixth-formers, has many associations with entitlement. Sixth formers at School A, as in every other school I have been to, enjoy a number of privileges, including not wearing uniform, choosing all their subjects and being able to leave the grounds. They are also generally physically more developed and do exciting things like learning to drive. The only people with more privileges are the only ones who are older – the staff. Glen struck me as very laid back (an opinion shared by T1) and not at all domineering, yet he clearly felt entitled (and maybe also obliged) to tell younger pupils what to do. When interviewed, Briony described how Glen told people to stop doing things 'in a nice way' but that 'he does kind of take like the alpha male role of it, which and they do listen to him, probably because he isn't a teacher but he is the eldest'. Briony went on to say how Steve, who as a Y12 was a year younger and would be staying on for another year, did not have as much influence as Glen but probably would have as he got older and the others got to know him.

It was not only the sixth formers whose sense of responsibility and competency to help increased with and was enhanced by their age. Briony said in interview that Raul had become more responsible and T2 felt that her Year 7s, 8s and 9s had all become more grown up over time. However, the tutors only rarely tried to develop this through giving the younger ones specific roles. The only organised experience most of the younger pupils were given of leadership responsibility was when all the Year 8s had to show new Year 7s around, which Ben and two unidentifiable boys mentioned in the focus group. T2 said that in the past her younger tutees had been 'reluctant' to take responsibility for 'leading activities'. However she had not asked them very often because 'independent working' was generally not their strength and she knew 'it would fall by the wayside'. Likewise, although T1 had given Lyndon responsibility for organising a basketball game once, it was clearly rare for younger pupils to be given responsibility for organising anything. I believe this shows how powerful an influence relative age is on the giving and taking of responsibility. This has the advantage of promoting responsible behavior in older pupils towards younger ones – even when that older one is not usually a particularly responsible personality. However, it may also have the disadvantage of limiting planned leadership opportunities for younger pupils.

4.5.4 Collective expectations and culture

As described above, there seemed to be a general expectation that older pupils should help younger ones. There also seemed to be a natural moral outrage at the idea of an older pupil picking on a younger one; when interviewed, Leon did not believe it could happen because it would be 'proper out of order'. There is some evidence that discussion activities helped shape a more compassionate culture. In his interview, Paul described general expressions of concern in his tutor group about victims of tsunami after discussing it during 'In the News' and T1 told me that in discussion activities the more thoughtful and caring attitudes about, for example, 'the poor kids in Africa', which were expressed by older tutees like Mike, would influence the younger ones. Data from my observations and what some interviewees (T1, T2, Ben, Paul, Jared, Leon) said further suggests that the helpful, disciplined and democratic behaviour the tutors and

older pupils modelled during activities encouraged that behaviour in the younger ones. This may have helped achieve the improvement in behavior since the introduction of vertical tutoring, which both tutors commented on.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

In attempting to use Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory to help me answer my research questions, it became clear during my analysis of the data that I needed to focus on how different techniques featured in the activities and any impact they might have had on the tutees' phase of prosocial cognitive behaviour. This led me not only to the identification of a technique not described by Bar-Tal and Raviv, but also to question the utility of their definitions of the phases and the efficacy of my own methodology in evaluating the prosocial cognitive development of my participants.

5.2 The techniques used in structured tutor-time activities and their possible effect on phases of prosocial behaviour

Although it was impossible to prove causal links between particular activities and the development of the students' prosocial cognition, the data collected did generate abductive explanations which may be relatable for a professional audience and are therefore discussed below.

Although I looked for data that might suggest that the greater number of boys was affecting the choice or characteristics of activities planned by the tutors, I did not find anything very convincing. T3, an associate tutor who covered for T1 for one tutor time, said that the boys in TG1 liked boys versus girls quizzes (see 4.2.9) but in both the focus group and my interview with Raul, boys said that quizzes were used too often. It is possible that the tutors provided lots of quizzes because they mistakenly thought the boys liked them, however I did not see any quizzes in the four weeks that I was at School A. The drama games were physically active, which might be stereotypically expected to appeal more to boys than girls, however my observations and interviews suggested that both boys and girls enjoyed them to a similar degree. Furthermore, the creative activity T2 provided was making jewellery, something which might stereotypically be expected to appeal more to girls than boys.

5.2.1 The use of reinforcement

Because all the secondary schools I have experienced, including School A, are places with numerous explicitly expressed rules and written policies codifying systems of punishment and reward, and because concrete forms of reinforcement are associated with the first three out of six phases of prosocial behaviour development in Bar-Tal and Raviv's cognitive model (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982), I was surprised to see very little evidence of tangible reinforcements being used in either tutor group. Although T1 and T2 both reported doing activities, especially quizzes, where there were small prizes for the group that won, I never observed or heard report of prosocial behaviour, either as part of a structured activity or as a spontaneous act, being given a concrete reward. Neither did I observe or hear report of the failure to act prosocially being punished in a concrete way. None of the data I collected suggested that the school's systems of behaviour management were used for the reinforcement of prosocial behaviour in any tangible way.

I think that three factors contributed to this. Firstly, I found no occasions when a student failed to act prosocially when their action was very obvioiusly and reasonably required, so there may have been no failiures to punish. Secondly, nearly all of the prosocial actions I either observed or heard about were fairly mundane – nobody devoted hours of their time to helping a fellow student with their homework or performed emergency first aid – so perhaps concrete rewards were not justified, although I might have expected small, tangible rewards like housepoints or stickers for helpful behaviour. Thirdly, because the students knew the tutor had the power to impose concrete sanctions, she might not have needed to use that power for it to still have an effect – one which would be invisible to my methodology. Fourthly, and most visibly to my methodology, the tutors were used more subtle techniques for reinforcing social norms. The reinforcements most often used by the tutors were verbal expressions of approval of, and general encouragement for, prosocial behaviour (see 4.3.3 and 4.4.7). According to Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory, this would be because the students were operating beyond Phases 1-3 when concrete reinforcement was necessary. The effective use of intangible praise and disapproval should indicate that all the students were operating at least at

Phase 4: Normative Behaviour. I felt during my observations that the tutors' everyday, positively intoned verbal interventions to ensure the smooth running and inclusivity of all activities, such as gently reminding students to wait their turn to speak were promoting the students' cognisance and appreciation of a 'reciprocal social contract', which in turn might promote or consolidated their performance of *Phase 5: Generalised Reciprocity* (see 2.4). It is plausible that a student who understands and (perhaps more importantly) internalises the social contract of everyone waiting for and getting their turn to speak is closer to believing that if they help others they will also receive help when they need it, although of course one does not automatically lead to the other.

As the official authority in the room and the one with the most power to impose sanctions and give rewards, the tutors could be expected to use both tangible and intangible forms of reinforcement. However, the way in which older students were occasionally observed and reported to admonish the misbehaviour of the younger ones (see 4.4.7) suggests that it was they who were using the technique of tangible reinforcements to maintain acceptable social norms, even though the data indicates it was to discourage anti-social behaviour rather than encourage prosocial behaviour. The possibility that reinforcement techniques employed by older students might sometimes be more effective than those of adult staff was supported by the case in which Glen succeeded in getting an intruding student to leave the room, when his tutor could not (see 4.4.7), as well as by one interpretation of what went on when older students challenged younger ones' beliefs about certain disadvantaged, needy people (see 5.2.5). According to Bar-Tal and Raviv, the technique of reinforcement becomes less effective as students mature and develop cognitively, because it can be seen as 'manipulation' (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 211). However, reinforcement by older fellow students might be less likely to be seen this way than if it comes from adult staff, and so the 'working life' of the technique might be extended. This leads me to wonder how big a step it would be to create a system or design activities in which older students regularly used reinforcement to promote prosocial behaviour and what it would take to enable and motivate them to do this (although of course one

also has to think about the problems and ethics of using and manipulating students in this way).

5.2.2 The use of modeling

As promised by some proponents of Vertical Tutoring, the mixed age structure of the tutor groups appeared to create opportunities for older students to model prosocial behaviour. However, whilst tutors were aware of the positive influence older students could have and made use of examples of their prosocial behaviour when they occurred to try to influence the behaviour of the younger students (for example when T2 highlighted Glen's support during the tutorial – see 4.4.7), they did not appear to prepare activities with the specific, primary purpose of creating such opportunities. The only exception to this was what Leon and T2 told me in interview about how T2 had asked Glen to mentor Leon. What Leon and T2 said about how Glen's mentoring had helped Leon to calm down suggests that Glen may have helped Leon understand and, to some extent, conform to social norms. Although my data about Leon indicated that his general behaviour was not normative, in terms of the prosocial behaviour described by Bar-Tal and Raviv's concept of *Phase 4: normative behaviour*, there was evidence from what Leon and T2 said that he had developed the cognitive capacity to understand what it was and why it was important.

What T1 told me about the leadership opportunities she gave Travis and how she put a disengaged Year 11 boy to work with a Year 8 boy on an enrichment day suggested that this was primarily intended to encourage the older boys to participate positively, rather than use them as models for positive participation (4.2.7). However, the data does suggest that the modeling of prosocial behaviour was a welcome side effect because some students appeared to be impressed by the sensible and caring way older students carried out various roles (see 4.2.11 and 4.4.7). This suggests that these older students may have helped to consolidate the younger students' understanding of *Phase 4: normative behaviour*. Although a few younger students in the focus group commented to me that the behaviour of some Year 11 students had been quite bad on their last day, it is encouraging that they identified it as bad and

expressed disapproval to me (although of course they might have been expected to say that to an adult interviewer, and the real test would be in how these students behaved on their last day in Year 11).

The younger students did also notice, and sometimes seem to have been influenced by, older students' spontaneous prosocial acts and their general atitutude and behaviour. The tutors commented to me that the sixth form students always behaved positively and the two sixth formers I saw always modeled sensible and helpful behaviour (see 4.5.3). There is evidence from some students, supported by my observation, that students in the middle age range of Year 10 tried to copy the prosocial behaviour of supporting the tutor by intervening in the misbehaviour of younger students (see 4.4.7). It is worth noting that the example I witnessed, of Raul and Briony intervening when Leon misbehaved, occurred the day after Raul had talked to me about Glen's interventions in Leon's behaviour, and only a few days after T2 had praised Glen for his support. Although when interviewed, Raul and Briony told me that they had tried to intervene like this on a number of other occasions, it does lead me to wonder whether the impact of older students as models of prosocial behaviour can be increased if it is highlighted and praised by the tutor, and if examples of mimicry by younger students is also noticed and rewarded with expressions of approval. This would combine the techniques of reinforcement and modeling.

Although most of the data collected about modeling referred to older students influencing younger ones, there was an example of a student influencing a peer of the same age when T1 and Jack told me in their interviews about how the Buddy Day grade review with Lyndon, and sitting with Lyndon in lessons instead of 'bad people', had improved his behaviour and grades (see 4.2.2). Although Jack was talking about an improvement in his general classroom behaviour – paying attention instead of 'mucking about' - rather than actions which specifically helped others, it does show the potential of using positive models as a technique for influencing behaviour and it is perhaps a relatively small step from Jack copying Lyndon's sensible behaviour to copying any helpful behaviour.

Although neither T1 or T2 said that they consciously planned to model prosocial behaviour, all the students I spoke to from both tutor groups certainly noticed and approved of the supportive, caring and fair way their tutors behaved (see 4.3.4 and 4.2.1). Just as the way the tutors used reinforcement to promote norms like turn-taking, the way they modeled caring for their tutees, saying encouraging things and valuing everyone's opinion also modeled support for a general reciprocal social contract: the tutors said that they expected their tutees to give and take and it made an impression on the tutees that every day their tutors showed how they did that themselves.

5.2.3 The use of induction

In the same way that most activities were not designed specifically as opportunities for modeling but still provided models which influenced tutees, so they were not designed for older students to induct their younger classmates in the reasons for prosocial behaviour but a form of induction still took place to some extent. This was particularly the case in the regular 'In the News' discussions (see 4.2.1). T1's assertion that she had 'never' heard intolerant attitudes from the sixth form students, that they regularly challenged the younger students' intolerant views and encouraged them to empathise with those in need, and that their more open minds were due to an 'age intelligence thing', was striking because I can think of plenty of examples from the news of adults voicing highly intolerant views.

I believe there are several possible reasons for this. Firstly, the sixth formers T1 had had in her tutor group since the school adopted VT may just, by chance, have been particularly open-minded and the younger ones might have been particularly easily swayed by their older peers. Secondly, *if* students in their late teens are more cognitively developed, as some theorists expect them to generally be (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Eisenberg and Morris, 2004) it may be easier for them to understand the arguments for treating everyone compassionately and assert those arguments in a classroom discussion (although it may still be hard for them to act according to those arguments in a

the world outside the tutor room). Thirdly, according to Bar-Tal and Raviv, older teenagers are more likely to be operating in the higher phases of general reciprocity and altruism than younger ones (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982) so perhaps their desire to maintain the general social contract of reciprocity motivates them to challenge intolerant views as well as to be tolerant themselves.

5.2.4 The use of role-playing

Based on what Barnard and a number of VT schools' websites claimed about the increased opportunities for students to take on responsibility and leadership roles (Barnard, 2010; Collingridge, 2009; Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School, 2011; Royds Hall High School, 2011; Sharrnbrook Upper School, 2011; St Gregory the Great Catholic School, 2011) I had thought I might see a more structured assignment of roles during activities than I eventually did. With a few exceptions, older students tended to assume responsibility and leadership roles rather than being given them as part of the tutors' instructions for doing the activities. Raul seemed to sum up the process quite well when he said in his interview that 'when we're doing activities, they [the older ones] all sort of take charge really' (see 4.2.8) and I saw this for myself on several occasions, for example when Glen helped show the younger ones how to make jewellery and Mike explained how to play the Describing Game (see 4.2.3 and 4.2.6). The fact that the older students chose to do this with no system of concrete reward for doing so suggests that they were operating at least at *Phase 4: Normative behaviour*, and Briony's interview comment that the older ones helped in some activities because they thought 'right I'm the oldest I kind of have to be responsible' echoes part of Bar-Tal and Raviv's definition of Phase 4, that people 'help even dissimilar others merely because they feel that it is expected of them to do so' (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 202). What could be debated here is the extent to which younger fellow tutees were 'dissimilar others' if there was a strong sense of belonging in the tutor group. Whether or not their help qualified as *Phase 6: Altruistic behaviour*, depends on the extent to which the older ones were (consciously or unconsciously) influenced by the desire for

social approval from their tutor or fellow tutees and the extent to which they did it because they cared about them. There may have been an element of both. The data about students intervening (or not) in cases of bullying also shows them sometimes taking on prosocial roles on their own initiative but the extent to which they were ready to take responsibility for solving the problem seems to vary from person to person, with Paul claiming in interview to have taken quite an active role by stopping what was being done to a younger pupil and taking the victim to a member of staff, whilst Jared saying in interview that he would report bullying to his tutor if he witnessed it but would not know what else to do (see 4.4.3). Jared's comment makes me wonder whether structured role-play activities could help train students to intervene in specific types of situation so that more students felt able to do so. Aaron's role as T2's 'wingman' was also self-assigned and makes me wonder whether, as I have found in my own professional practice, some students have a very strong desire to help the teacher and the technique of role-play might be most attractive (to the potential helper) and beneficial (to both helper and helped) when the role is a genuinely useful one – *role-work* rather than *role-play*.

As well as older students taking a prosocial role upon themselves, it can also be argued that students 'assigned' prosocial roles to each other when they went to them for help. This seemed to happen mainly with regard to personal problems (see 4.4.5) and very rarely to do with anything else, especially anything to do with academic work. This could have been for a variety of reasons but the success of the helping relationship between Jack and Lyndon, which was established and monitored by the highly structured Buddy Day Grade Review, once again suggests that when an activity is first structured by the tutor it can help to initiate further acts of prosocial behaviour by that student. This is supported by the success of all the other examples of tutors assigning helping roles to students that I was informed about, including Glen mentoring Leon and Travis taking responsibility for leading the tutor group on some enrichment day activities (see 4.2.7).

5.2.5 Use of story contents

According to Bar-Tal and Raviv, the 'Use of story contents' technique works by describing 'helping acts from the point of view of the helper and/or helpee' which stimulates individuals to 'use advanced moral reasonings and develop empathy' (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982, p. 210), which would be required for Phases 5 and 6. T1's description of the way in which older students successfully challenged their younger fellow tutees to imagine how they would feel if they were in the position of the disadvantaged people they were talking about in their 'In the News' discussion, saying 'what about if you were in that situation?' appears to show this process at work, with the older student encouraging and perhaps scaffolding the younger one's own interpretation of life from the perspective of a person in need. T1 certainly believed that during these discussions the older students made the younger ones think more deeply and empathise, and that this had a lasting, mind-opening effect, especially on some of the younger to middle age range boys like Ben, who began with quite intolerant views (whereas the girls tended to have more tolerant views to start with). This resonates with what Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum found about the effect of VT on perspective-taking by boys aged 14-15, although their study did not go into any detail about activities within tutor groups (Ewan-Corrigan and Gummerum, 2011).

Neither the tutors nor any of the tutees talked about the students taking any action to help any of the disadvantaged people talked about in the discussions. I wonder whether the mind-opening effect perceived by T1 contributed to the students' general belief – so strongly evident in what both tutors and many of the students in both tutor groups said – that they were all part of a group who would look out for each other, even those tutees that were not their close friends. I further wonder whether, for some students, these discussions and the moral-models provided by their older fellow-tutees, could have promoted operation at Phase 5: *Generalised reciprocity* by helping them to reason that all needy people deserved inclusion in the general social contract of reciprocity. However, there is no evidence that they either did or did not. It would be very interesting to follow one of these discussions with an opportunity for students to

do something prosocial for people in a far away place, to see how many volunteered.

For some students, activities like this might have developed their ability to empthasise with people who they had never met and who seemed very different from themselves, to promote operation at Phase 6: *Altruistic behaviour,* but again the lack of opportunities for students to be prosocial to people outside their tutor group (or the inability of my methods to discover any) meant there was no data to give an insight into this.

In one way, T1's belief that the older students' views carried more weight than hers fits with Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory, which says that the direct techniques of induction and reinforcement may become less effective as the child developes cognitively because this might be seen as 'pressure, extortion or manipulation', and that 'moral models' become more important. What T1 said implied to me that older students might be accepted as moral models, whereas tutors might be seen as moral manipulators and therefore rejected.

Although in T1's mind the older students changed the way the younger ones thought about certain types of people it is equally possible that some or all of the younger ones only changed what they said about those types of people in order to win the approval, or avoid the disapproval, of those older students. If so then the technique at work in the discussions is the more direct one of *reinforcement* and it would then be more likely that any promotion of prosocial cognition would be no further than Phase 4: *Normative behaviour*. Indeed, there would be no reinforcement to actually do anything prosocial and, inspite of what the tutors said, the students may not even believe what they say, just say it to gain approval. This further highlights the difficulties of both assessing changes in students' prosocial cognition and attributing any change to specific techniques. What seems to be a moral-model might really be a coercive force if it is a high status peer, and only prosocial actions which are clearly the result of a student's own moral reasoning, done outside the knowledge of coercive forces, could accurately be attributed to operation at Phases 5 or 6.

5.2.6 A sixth technique of familiarisation?

Based on what tutors and students said, the most effective technique for promoting prosocial behaviour was not one of Bar-Tal and Raviv's five. This was the technique of using activities to help - and in the words of one student, 'force' – them get to know each other and form a relationship which was familial in the sense that the tutees might not all be friends but they accepted each other as members of a common group entitled to a degree of care and consideration.

Paul summed up the feelings of many students I talked to when he described TG1 as a 'family'. TG1 and TG2 also seemed to be relatively happy, functional families: there was lots of evidence of members being supportive and 'looking out for each other', and none of them rowing or being unkind. Although it is certainly true that members sometimes found each other's behaviour silly or annoying, and some tutees would not have picked some of the others for members of their family, the data I collected from them gives a sense of acceptance of each other's right to belong.

Clearly, a feeling of belonging to a group is not the same as active prosocial behaviour and it is not strong evidence for the attainment of ability to operate at any particular phase of prosocial cognitive development – a young child might feel a strong sense of family but still only act prosocially when motivated by concrete rewards or sanctions. I also found no evidence that this experience increased the students' readiness to help anyone outside the tutor group.

However, I do think the reported success of the enrichment days and induction activities (see 4.2.7 – 4.2.8) in making groups of mixed age, mixed sex tutees work together towards a collective goal points to their cognisance of a general social contract of reciprocity. Doing activities where often a literal helping hand or extra pair of hands were needed to navigate an obstacle course or make a piece of art, and associating that working together with fun and success, may have developed in the students an assumption (even if it was only subconscious) of a social contract of reciprocity between them and their fellow tutees: each individual learned by experience that members of the tutor group

could and would help each other, at least in these situations. They also found out about some of their own and each other's strengths and weaknesses, which may have helped them understand when and how they could help.

Of course it does not follow that, just because the tutor group bonded as a team and learned to give and receive help on the enrichment day that this social contract would transfer to any other situation. The way in which tutees did not generally trust each other to help with very personal matters is evidence that it does not. This raises an interesting question about Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory: to be described as operating at Phase 6: *Altruistic behaviour*, must an individual be ready to help with any way necessary? Similarly, to be to be described as operating at Phase 5: *Generalised reciprocity*, must an individual be ready to help with any situation in the assumption that they would be helped with anything? How general does help have to be to qualify as generalised reciprocity? This is closely related to the question of who is included in the individual's empathies or qualifies for inclusion in their social contract of reciprocity, and so is discussed further below in 5.3.1.

The other activities done through the year appear to have continued this process of familiarisation. Although the discussions revealed some of the students' intolerant views, they also showed those students' views becoming more tolerant, perhaps teaching the tutees that even apparently intolerant people could be reasoned with. The data suggest to me that often it was the way in which the students performed the activities which bonded them together and developed a social contract between them. In the drama games the smiling, laughter and high phases of energetic involvement and inclusivity may have contributed to the maintenance of social norms which expected everyone to be included and play fairly, and perhaps a social contract in which all those included internalised the need to contribute and accept the contribution of others.

Similarly, the TG2 student who had been impressed by the way Glen took the register or helped them learn how to make jewellery might have been made to believe more strongly in the capacity of the older students in his tutor group, or

even students generally, to do the responsible, helpful activities usually associated with adult staff. It seems to me that if Phase 5 is based on an individual's belief that they should help because they want others to help them, then they must learn that they and others have the capability as well as the willingess.

In conclusion then, one of the ways in which my research contributes knowledge to this field is the identification of this sixth technique of *familiarisation* to the five already described by Bar-Tal and Raviv.

5.3 Which phases of prosocial behaviour were promoted?

The data I collected suggested that at the beginning of the year, with tutors forcing tutees to interact with and help each other, most of the activities were only promoting Phase 2: *Compliance*. However, the examples of older students helping younger ones during activities in which they had not been directed to help, and from which they gained no tangible reward, suggests that Year 12-13 students were operating somewhere between Phases 4-6. I was not able to interview Mike or Glen so I could not explore their motivations, but the tutors' and younger students' descriptions of the 'caring' (see 4.4.7) way in which the older students looked out for the younger ones on a daily basis, coupled with the fact that the younger students were much less able to give help in return, is suggestive to me of Phase 6: *Altruistic behaviour*.

There was also some evidence that some of the mid age range students, like Tracey in Year 9, and Paul and Raul who were in Year 10, cared about other students, and not only their friends or those in the same year or sex. Most of their caring actions were not a directed part of the activities they were doing, were not part of an assigned role (with the exception of Glen when he was asked to help Leon), received no tangible reward and rarely received an intangible reward either, as far as I could tell. This points more strongly towards Phase 6 than it does to Phases 4 or 5. However, as there was little data about TG1 and TG2 students' behaviour towards people outside the tutor group, it is hard to know how far the tutees' desire to fulfil norms, maintain a social contract

or alleviate others' distress extended beyond their tutor group. As previously discussed above in 5.2.6, Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory focuses on motivation to help and does not define any limits about what is done or for whom. On the one hand, according to T1 and my observations, the activities involving two tutor groups joined together were not very successful, with tutees choosing to and being allowed to sit with their own tutor groups and so refusing to 'gel'. Based on my conclusion that *familiarisation* was one of the key foundations of tutees looking out for each other, this limited evidence suggests that the tutees might not be very ready to help someone from a different tutor group. On the other hand, Paul's claim in interview to have helped younger students outside his tutor group on several occasions. If this is true then it indicates he was operating at Phase 6 because he wanted to alleviate their distress (although there is no proof of a causal link to activities done in tutor time).

5.4 A need to redefine the phases of prosocial behaviour development?

It is surely stating the obvious that most people will do more for their friends and family members than they will do for others. Without being able to prove a causal link between tutor-time activities and prosocial acts, what can perhaps be argued is that these activities, especially the ones which used the technique of familiarisation, helped the students to broaden the circle of people whom they treated as friends and family. The students and tutors attributed their positive behaviour towards each other to being forced to get to know each other. Who they would actually go to for certain types of help was more strictly limited to close friends, sometimes but not always same age and gender, but the giving of help seemed to cross wider boundaries of closeness than the asking for it. When interviewed about whether she thought Mike intervened on Tracey's behalf because he was (at that time) a big Year 11 and she was a little Year 8, Karen replied no, she thought anyone would do it for anyone whilst Jack said in interview that he would stick up for someone if he knew them. I would suggest then that Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory should be modified to include two sub-divisions within each phase: the first - for example Phase 5.a – for someone who would help people they were familiar with and Phase 5.b – for someone who would help anyone they met.

This conclusion is a second contribution to the field by my research, because previous stage-based theories have not identified the need to draw clear distinctions between the individual's development of empathy, or a sense of a social contract of reciprocity, with persons with whom he or she has differing degrees of familiarity.

5.5 Is Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory of phases a valid way of assessing types of prosocial behaviour in a qualititative study?

I found that observations, interviews and a focus group were an effective way to collect data about the kinds of activities used in the two tutor groups in my case study. They also enabled me to collect data about the participants' prosocial behaviour and the conditions for prosocial behaviour in the tutor room. My case study was intended to generate a thick description and conclusions which would be *relatable* for fellow professionals rather than *generalisable,* so I did not expect to prove a causal link between specific activities and specific changes in the students' prosocial behaviour. However, my attempt to analyse prosocial behaviour using a theoretical framework based on a development in cognitive processes revealed a fundamental disadvantage of my mixed-method approach in assessing which phase of Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory students were operating at. First of all, I relied heavily on what students said to me about what they did and why they did it. Given that an individual operating at Phase 4 is motivated by their desire for social approval, whatever any student said to me about caring for a fellow tutee may have been motivated by their desire for my approval rather than genuine altruism. Although what other participants said, and my own observations, often supported the impression that particular tutees were caring and that the tutor groups looked out for each other like family members, these was still quite subjective impressions to be used for making the specific judgement about motivation required by using Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory of phases. Although humankind's failure to invent a mindreading machine means that much educational, social and pyschological research into why people do what they do has to rely on what participants say about their reasons, I could have used some more structured questions in my interviews

and focus group to a) explore what the students understood about their fellow tutees' needs and feelings; and b) explore what they thought they might gain from their own prosocial acts. This should have enabled me to more effectively (though by no means thoroughly) analyse their cognitive ability to perceive intangible influences and any general social contract of reciprocity, and their ability to empathise. I would then have been able to more accurately describe their prosocial behaviour in terms of cognitive development and answer my research questions in more detail.

Secondly, Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory focuses on motivation to help and ignores capacity to help. What Jared said (see 4.4.3) about wanting to help if someone was being bullied but not knowing how does not fit neatly into any of Bar-Tal and Raviv's phases - what phase is someone at if they strongly empathise with someone's distress but take no action because they do not know what to do? As I read it, Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory focuses on what individuals are able to comprehend and *assumes* action on the basis of that ability, rather than on what they are actually willing and able to do, which might require one or many other things like knowledge, experience, courage, status and even physical size. Although I did collect data about some students' beliefs about their ability to help, my interviews could have used a few structured questions to find out more about the difference between what students wanted to do to help and what they felt they could do.

5.6 Does age matter and does mixed age help?

Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory about phases of prosocial behaviour development does not say that prosociality automatically increases with age and there is no suggestion in any of the literature I have reviewed that someone who is 18 will automatically be more prosocial than someone who is 11, anymore than someone who is 80 will automatically be more prosocial than someone who is 40 (Bar-Tal and Raviv, 1982; Eisenberg, 1982b; Eisenberg, 2000). In fact Bar-Tal and Raviv say that many people never achieve *Phase 6: Altruistic behaviour*. What they do say is that to be able to help, a child (and presumably and adult

too) needs to develop the cognitive abilities associated with helping, such as perspective-taking, empathy and moral judgement.

I would add that, as discussed at the end of the previous section, individuals may also need other qualities such as knowledge, experience, courage, status and strength, depending on the kind of help needed. Proponents of VT might say that it is exactly these things that older students tend (but only tend) to have more of than younger ones and that this is why they can play an important role as both helpers and models for helping for the younger ones. My case study, in which the older students seemed to perform more prosocial acts than the younger ones, and in which the younger ones noticed and appreciated that, would appear to support that assertion. However, I believe this conclusion also suggests that activities which trained pupils of all ages when, how and why to help, using Bar-Tal and Raviv's five techniques plus familiarisation, might increase both their will and their capacity to be prosocial.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The answers to the research questions

At all times I have tried to keep my research questions at the centre of what I have done and written. Whilst Chapter 4 examines the micro-detail of my data and Chapter 5 discusses its implications, the following are my considered answers to those questions and the contributions I have made to the field.

6.1.1 The structured activities which the data suggest best promote unstructured prosocial behaviour and the sixth technique of *familiarisation*

The activities I collected data about contained examples of the five techniques identified by Bar-Tal and Raviv. As discussed in the previous chapter, these appeared to promote some examples of unstructured prosocial behaviour. However, it was activities which contained a sixth technique of *familiarisation* which, often in combination with one or more of the other five, seemed to make the biggest contribution to the promotion of prosocial behaviour and the conditions for prosocial behaviour. The activities which best promoted unstructured prosocial behaviour seemed to be the ones in which tutees of all ages both enjoyed themselves in each other's company and had to get to know each other in order to enjoy the activity (although I was unable to verify this with the oldest students because I could not interview them directly, and had to rely on my observations and the impressions of the other students and the tutors). These activities appeared to broaden the circle of people with whom each individual student felt they had a bond and therefore increased the number of people they felt motivated and able to help. This conclusion supports, and is supported by, the recent study for the Department for Education (published after my research was completed) which found that the two most powerful motivators for prosocial behaviour by 16-19 year olds were 'personal acheivement/growth/enjoyment' and 'meet people/new friends' (Lee *et al*, 2012, p. 25). This sixth technique of *familiarisation* was my research's first, and I

believe most important, contribution to the field and also its most important contribution to colleagues trying to promote prosocial behaviour in schools.

Although they were not strictly tutor time activities, in that they took place on special ‘enrichment days’, and as such I was not able to observe any, extended teambuilding activities such as assault courses and fashion shows had a big impact. They were novel, practical, physically active and often outdoor activities, which must have included many tasks which required two pairs of hands or a ‘leg up’. Cooperation, reciprocation, the need to know names, a shared fate and almost certainly humour were built into the activities and formed a firm foundation for future relationships. ‘Icebreaker’ games like T1’s ‘Frog’ were also effective for what seems like the simple but vital first step of priming a relationship for prosociality, which was learning each other’s names. The speed and superficiality of these was apparently very good for overcoming shyness.

However, these relationships were sustained and developed through much briefer but more frequent tutor time activities which shared some of the enrichment day characteristics. What we might call ‘parlour games’, like TG1’s ‘Describing Game’, were particularly effective. Knowing each other well and thinking deeply about each other was necessary to playing this game, but it also made that knowledge and the expression of that knowledge fun and companionable. It could have been used to mock but instead it was inclusive. The gentle teasing seemed to say ‘we know you, you’re one of us, you’re a bit funny like we’re all a bit funny’. That created the family atmosphere which made tutees look out for each other. In a similar way, team quizzes also seemed effective in creating bonds because they required pupils to share information and perhaps, depending on the question, could require areas of knowledge which younger or less academically able students may be strong in, making every group member valuable to the others.

T2’s drama games were similarly successful because their fast pace and dependence on names forced pupils to forget about their social inhibitions. Pupils had to learn a bit about each other and to reveal a bit about themselves but it was a safe situation because the social interaction took place within the

game's explicit rules and was therefore comfortingly predictable, rather than within a less predictable 'normal' social situation where the objectives and rules of the 'game' are uncertain and perhaps skewed in favour of the socially dominant. In a game, a socially insecure individual like Briony knows what to say and when to say it, and that what other people say will be within certain limits, supervised by a benign tutor. In games, everyone gets, and has to take, their turn. At the end of the game, everyone associates their interaction with each other with pleasure. Like the teambuilding activities and the Describing Game, tutees had raw, physical fun together, which once again built and maintained the prosociable family atmosphere.

Discussions, the main example of which was the regular 'In the News' were less universally enjoyed, probably because they were more static, depended to an extent in the level of interest in a particular topic and required a level of thought, expression and public confidence which not everyone was willing or able to muster. It was probably also over-used because it required no preparation or resources. However, in the long term, discussions still effectively promoted prosocial behaviour by increasing tutees' general knowledge about other people's situations and allowing more mature older tutees and the tutor to challenge preconceptions. This increased the tutees' empathy and perspective-taking, which are necessary precursors to prosocial behaviour. Furthermore, regular exposure to discussions can make some pupils more confident and more willing to participate, especially if the tutor is rigorous about making sure that every pupil has a turn.

The jewellery-making in TG2 was an individual task and so did not have interaction built in, but having the tutees do their individual tasks together around the same table led to spontaneous helping behaviour because of the built in difference in ability and the kind of running commentary that several pupils gave on their progress, which signalled when they needed or were able to give help.

Activities like the jewellery-making, which are creative and challenging but perhaps less emotionally loaded because they do not have the baggage of

academic subjects may be better vehicles for peer-teaching activities. However, TG1's tutor plus same age peers review of classwork, grades and behaviour appeared to be capable of promoting spontaneous prosocial behaviour and a substantial improvement in classroom behaviour and learning over the long term.

Structured peer-mentoring relationships can also have a powerful prosocial effect, making the most of an older tutee's character and experience and providing constant support to a tutee in need. This support is perhaps more effective because it comes from someone who is an intermediate between an adult and a adolescent; privileged and looked up to but still 'one of us', so their help and authority has more authority.

In conclusion it would seem fair to say that the technique of *familiarisation,* which I have identified, helps 'the tutor group that plays together to stay together' but there is room for more serious or academic-learning focused activities if the prosocial atmosphere and relationships are firmly established.

6.1.2 Are there any key features or variables which the data suggest promotes prosocial behaviour?

Apart from having name learning, cooperation, reciprocity and fun built in, a number of features and variables seem to improve the chance that activities will promote prosocial behaviour.

In terms of resources, large rooms with flexible seating arrangements allow the more physically active activities to take place and more conference-like positioning of the students, which makes face-to-face interaction and spontaneous helping easy. Thoughtful seating plans make the most of this. Specifically, arrangements where tutees are not isolated in year or friendship based groups and where lots of differently aged pupils can make eye contact and casually interact are most effective. Therefore islands and conference style layouts are better than rows. When tutors can get access to facilities like computers and the drama studio without having to book them it makes

providing these activities much easier. Apparently small matters like a lack of blinds can also have a serious impact on the tutor's ability to provide certain activities.

The extra-small size of the tutor groups when I saw them definitely contributed to their intimacy and sense of fellowship. However there had still been a sense of family when the groups were bigger and the mixed age composition was deemed by tutors and students to be important to this.

The success of mixed-age activities in the tutor groups and the extent to which pupils had bonded across their whole forms is a positive indication that the ice-breaking, teambuilding activities worked but also that tutors do need to compel their tutees to do this. The failure of the pair of tutor groups to gel on the TG2 buddy days is an example of what can happen if pupils are not compelled to mix and bond with frequent teambuilding activities. As Jared said, sometimes students do need to be forced to mix but they generally enjoy it when they are and appreciate the reasons for it in retrospect (see 4.3.1). This seems to be because pupils not only prefer to be with their friends but prefer to be with their 'own age-kind' even when these are not the close friends they socialise with outside tutor time. Furthermore, tutees may feel an obligation to choose to be with their own age-kind even when they are happy to be with other ages.

Generally in whole class or large group activities, the greater the age range the greater the task-focus and the greater the opportunities for prosocial behaviour. Meanwhile, in pair activities, the greater the age gap the greater the task-focus and the greater the opportunities for prosocial behaviour. This would seem to be because significantly older pupils are more likely to take and be granted a leadership role and have significantly greater ability which they can use to assist the younger ones. Widely age-diverse groups are also the least likely to polarise around age-related behaviour patterns. This is also the case with mixed-sex as opposed to single-sex groupings.

Although the mixed age composition of the tutor groups seems to be fundamental to promoting the prosocial atmosphere, attitudes and behaviour in

the tutor groups, sometimes it is the small number of same-age peers which is important. An example of this is in the grade reviews done in TG1. These may not have been as effective if done in mixed age pairs/small groups because it was the participants' knowledge of each other's performance in subject classes which enabled them to comment on it in detail. Furthermore, their future and continuing presence in each other's classes allowed them to help each other make and sustain changes in behaviour, as with Jack and Leon in TG1. There is also the benefit of the closeness generated by there being only a small group of each age. What T2 said about her Year 11 (see 4.2.7) suggests that large (four or more) groups of one year can turn inward and be an obstacle to the full-engagement and interaction of the whole tutor group.

Some activities are fun because the whole form plays together, in particular The Describing Game and the drama games in which everyone is involved all the time rather than having little to do while they await their turn. It would also seem that, at least if the form is relatively small, the advantage of whole group activities is that they allow the tutor to monitor everyone's involvement and ensure that everyone remains on task and takes a turn. This may explain why the tutors seemed to prefer whole group activities. However, in activities like discussions, doing them as a whole class inevitably means that pupils wait a long time for their turn and some may lose focus while they do so. Therefore pair or small group activities may sometimes be more engaging because they allow each pupil to participate more often. Pairs or threes are also preferable for activities in which the purpose is for one pupil to help another. This needs to be set against the fact that because the tutor can only be with one group at a time, and because individual group dynamics may affect their focus on the task, participation by some groups or individuals may actually decline. Ensuring that the groups are composed of mixed ages and sexes can reduce the risk of that happening.

Activities can facilitate helping behaviour within the activity if some of the participants have a higher level of ability, because this provides an opportunity for the more capable group to be helpful and/or take the lead. Whilst this will usually be the older tutees, I can envisage activities in which younger tutees

might be more knowledgeable or practised (such as certain games or quiz topics).

The prevalence of whole class activities led by the tutor in this case study reduced the opportunity for prosocial leadership behaviour by pupils. However the success of pupils in the opportunities they did get and the way that discussions in which everyone had to take their turn contributing built confidence, suggests that this could be done more often. Activities in which pupils each had to take a turn in different roles, particularly leadership, might slowly increase individual capacity and confidence in prosocial leadership roles.

Another feature which can build capacity and confidence is 'non-academicness'. Demanding but non-academic activities, such as the fashion show Travis organised, give less-academically able pupils a chance to shine in areas where they may have above average ability, and give everyone a chance to develop prosocial skills such as leadership, teamwork and communication. Although these skills may still be practised in subject class activities, lack of ability in the subject may prove an obstacle or a deterrent to participation or success; this an important gap tutor time activities can fill. This helps to promote the development of students' prosocial behaviour because, given that *Phase 5: Generalised reciprocity* requires students to believe that if they need help someone will help them, activities which reveal their peers' strengths, particularly in areas like leadership, teamwork and communication, are likely to help students believe their peers are willing *and able* to help them.

In terms of themes and types of activities, tutees' interest is affected by their personal preferences, especially in discussions like 'In the News' and quizzes. However, it appears tutees will accept activities they do not like and still benefit from them as long as the activities they do not like are only a part of a varied programme. The subject of themselves and each other seems to be universally popular but nothing should be over-used and activities based on this can fail if the pupils are given a personal information sharing activity to do with a partner they already know well or are paired with someone they are close friends with and are therefore tempted to chat.

As already described in 6.1.1, the most prosocially beneficial features of activities are needing to use names and/or some personal details, requiring tutees to help each other physically or by sharing knowledge at a fast pace. In short activities need to be active and interactive.

6.1.3 The kinds of prosocial behaviour that the data suggest may be promoted and the kinds of activities which it suggests promote them

As one who has spent a large part of my professional career dealing with problems between members of tutor groups I think one of the most conducive conditions for prosocial behaviour was the lack of antisocial behaviour; or to put it in a more positive way: the students' tolerant, implicitly and explicitly inclusive attitude towards each other and newcomers supported prosocial behaviour. Although it was not part of my research design to measure the amount of bullying at School A before and after the introduction of VT, it is true to say that none of the participants reported and I never observed any bullying between fellow tutees, whereas at my last school, most of the bullying (though still only occasional) was between tutees. Older pupils appeared to be quick to intervene to prevent bullying when they noticed it outside the tutor group, but there is no evidence that younger pupils went to older ones with their bullying problems. It is true that most serious cases of outside tutor group bullying still seemed to have been noticed by or taken to adult staff but I think this is because adult staff are still seen as having the competence and authority to take serious action like calling parents and imposing sanctions, whereas older pupils are known to lack those powers, limiting them to stepping in when something is actually occurring. Training older pupils and giving them the authority to take more complex action may change this, but other pupils and parents may never accept them having this much authority and the school may be wary of over-zealous older pupils making a situation worse.

Based on this family atmosphere there were a variety of unstructured prosocial acts: tutees helping each other with tasks, sharing information, reassuring each other, sticking up for each other and sticking up for their tutor. The oldest pupils

seemed ready to take responsibility for moderating the behaviour of younger pupils and their right to intervene was accepted by those younger pupils. In some circumstances they provided important and much valued support to the tutor. Once again it seems that the status of being the oldest prompts prosocial behaviour. The role prompts the sense of responsibility which prompts the behaviour. Help with the non-academic activities done in form time was common and occurred whenever an older pupil noticed that a younger pupil needed it. Whilst this was not very often in the sessions I observed, older pupils were certainly quick to help when it was and the younger ones gratefully accepted this. This reinforces my conclusion that for spontaneous prosocial behaviour to occur, all that is needed is two pupils of significantly different ages to be 'with' each other (not just in proximity but arranged so that they are within the same social circle, i.e. side by side or face to face) and for the younger one to be doing an activity with which they sometimes need help.

Following my experience at School B, I was surprised not to hear many anecdotes about older pupils helping younger ones with their GCSE and A Level choices. I cannot explain why that is but speculate that either they were such informal and incidental conversations that the pupils have not remembered them or more likely options have not been discussed in tutor time so the opportunity has not arisen and the precedent has not been set. Furthermore, whilst potentially very valuable, older pupils helping younger pupils with academic work was very rare, probably for several reasons. First of all, this never seemed to have been an organised activity so once again the precedent for younger pupils to ask for help in this area and for older ones to offer it had not been established. Even though the younger pupils were very familiar with the older ones and used to initiating conversations with them, they may still have felt reluctant to 'bother' them with a request for academic help, whatever they told me they would do in theory. Secondly, tutor time seemed to be seen and valued as a change from the normal academic focus of lessons; pupils enjoyed the non-academic activities they did in tutor time and may have been reluctant to spoil it talking about work. Thirdly, pupils rarely had academic work out in tutor time and therefore there was little chance of a spontaneous request for or offer of help. Fourthly, most of the pupils did not appear to be

highly motivated academically. Pupils of the same age did help each other sometimes, but this is because they would usually have had the same work to hand in at the same time, giving them the same interest in getting it done. Realising the potential of academic help from older pupils would probably therefore demand a regular activity organised by the tutor.

In conclusion then, the kind of prosocial behaviour that can be promoted depends not only on the relationships and capabilities developed by activities and everyday tutorial life, but also by the opportunities that these activities and this life gives rise to.

6.2 Refining Bar-Tal and Raviv's six phase framework

Although my data suggests that the newly identified technique of *familiarisation* was the most effective in promoting prosocial behaviour between between the students in my case study, it highlights an important problem with Bar-Tal and Raviv's theoretical framework. Bar-Tal and Raviv state that in *Phase 5: Generalised reciprocity,* individuals perceive a general social contract whereby people help others on the understanding that, when they themselves need help, someone will help them. However, they do not define how general that social contract is. Although Paul reported helping younger students from outside the tutor group (see 4.4.3) and Aaron acted to include me in the party (see 4.4.4), all the prosocial behaviour I collected data about occurred within the tutor group (induction activities and Scott's assignment to buddy Paul occurred when new students were formally given membership of the group). Although the technique of *familiarisation* seemed to widen the circle of people that an individual tutee would help from their close friends to the whole tutor group, logic might then suggest that the students have to be familiarised with an individual, or even that the individual has to become a member of their tutor group before they will include them in their 'general' social contract. This may be underestimating those students' prosociality, and I regret that I did not ask them more structured questions about their prosocial behaviour to people outside the tutor group (see 3.6.4), but it emphasises the difficulty in evaluating the generality of generalised reciprocity. My second contribution then is to

suggest that I would suggest then that Bar-Tal and Raviv's theory should be modified to include two sub-divisions within Phases 5 as follows:

Phase 5a: group generalised reciprocity. Individuals who perceive and act to uphold a reciprocal social contract with the people they live and work with on a regular basis, but not just close friends and family.

Phase 5b: universal generalised reciprocity. Individuals who perceive and act to uphold a reciprocal social contract with any other human being they meet.

This allows for a much clearer analysis and evaluation of the development of an individual's prosocial cognition.

6.3 Implications for practice

I believe my findings offer four key implications for professional practice. Obviously the location of my case study makes them especially relatable for colleagues working in VT schools but I also believe they are relevant to those working in schools with a horizontal pastoral structure.

First of all, using activities to help familiarise the students with a wider group than their circle of immediate friends is fundamental to promoting prosocial behaviour between them. Concentrated teambuilding activities on 'enrichment days' at the beginning of the school year seem to have a significant impact on the students by forcing them to learn each other's names and putting them in situations where it is both necessary and enjoyable to help each other. However, these probably need to be reinforced by frequent smaller scale activities which, once again, make it clear that cooperation with the wider group is fun and achieves objectives.

Secondly, role*work* is may be more effective than role*play* at developing prosocial cognition. Giving students roles in which they actually do something significant for another person or persons, such as Glen's mentoring of Leon and assistance to the tutor (see 4.4.7) seems not only to teach the helper that they

can help, but teaches the helpee that young people have that capacity. I believe this is very empowering and the opposite of the diminution of young people which Ecclestone and Hayes fear (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009a).

Thirdly, the apparent importance of rolework and the value Jack and Paul placed on students giving each other help with schoolwork and in class (see 4.2.2 and 4.4.1) implies there is greater scope for promoting helping behaviour with academic work. This may appeal both to those who believe school should be focused on academic learning and those, like Fielding, who believe they should be more interpersonal learning communities (Fielding, 2007).

Finally, I think that the students' comments about T1 and T2 (see 4.2.1 and 4.3.1) imply that, whether or not a tutor group contains a wide age range, one of the most important models for prosocial behaviour is the tutor and that the way they conduct activities is very important. Tutors who model compassion and reciprocal norms like turn-taking seem to impress those values on their tutees.

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APPENDIX 1 – FIELDNOTES FORM

DAY:…… DATE:…/06/11 TIMING:…… - …… AG:……

FS:…… YR:… DOB: …/…/… GR:… EG:……. JOINED HEX: …/…
P/G OCCUPATION/S:……...
F./S./L.:……..
FS NOTES:……
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PHYSICAL SETTING:……...
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SEATING PLAN Y/N?:……..
WEATHER:……
MISC. NOTES:……
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SKETCH

TITLE:……
DESC:……
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REG/NEW?.....
TIMING: ……:……. - …….:……. LOC.:……
AIM:……..
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RES.:……
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INST./RULES:……
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INS	GR	YR	NOTES

FS ROLE:……
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ASSIGNED Y/N?:…… FIXED Y/N?…… USUAL Y/N?.....

MOT. LEVEL: *V.LOW – LOW – MED – HIGH – V.HIGH*
MOTIVATION NOTES:……
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ENJOYMENT LEVEL?: *V.LOW – LOW – MED – HIGH – V.HIGH*
ENJOYMENT NOTES:……
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RISKS/COSTS?.....
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BENEFITS?.....
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DIFFICULTY FOR FS? *V.LOW – LOW – MED – HIGH – V.HIGH*
DIFFICULTY NOTES:……
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FS EFFICACY: *V.LOW – LOW – MED – HIGH – V.HIGH*
EFFICACY NOTES:……
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NARRATIVE

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NARRATIVE CONT.

APPENDIX 2 – POST-INTERVIEW QUESTION SCHEDULE

Post-Observation Interview

FS:..... AG:..... Date:.../06/11 Time:...:... - ...:...

Consent Form Signed:…

1. How well do you know people in this advisory group? Who do you know the best?
2. When you joined this advisory group, how did you get to know people?
3. Which activities have helped you get to know people?
4. So far I've seen your class do drama games, learn how to make things, and have discussions about what's in the news, What other activities have you done?
5. What are your favourites?
6. What are your least favourite?
7. Has there ever been an activity that really made you see someone in a new way?
8. I've also heard about the enrichment days, what's good and bad about them?
9. What do you do on the buddy day?
10. Are there any other activities where you've helped each other?
11. Can you give me any examples of people helping each other or looking out for each
other?
12. How much do you trust other people in your advisory? How did you learn that you
could trust them? How much do you think they can trust you?
13. Do you feel any kind of responsibility for helping people in your class with: a.) homework; b.) bullying c.) personal life? Why/Why not?
14. Who would you go to if you had a problem with a.) homework; b.) bullying c.) personal life?
15. Do you think you have the ability to help people with a,b or c? Do you think any of them have the ability to help you?
16. What's good about the way Miss [TUTOR NAME] runs your advisories?
17. Ok, imagine you're an advisor and you want to make your class more helpful to each other generally, so they'll look out for each other and help each other with any problems, what kind of activities would you do? Tell me about them.

APPENDIX 3 – FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

GD + GR Focus Group 6th July 2011

Participants:

Name	Gender	Year	Advisory

What I'm interested in is how the activities you do in advisory help you to get to know each other and how they encourage you to help each other out. I 've learned a lot from my observations and individual interviews, but I hope that by
having a group discussion we might get even more ideas about what works best.

1. Which activities do you think help you to get to know and get on with each other?

2. What is it about them that helps?

3. Is there anything that could be done to increase the amount people help each other?

APPENDIX 4 – DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

APPENDIX 4 – Description of Activities

Activities I observed, described in the order in which I first saw them:

Talking about the holidays (planned discussion):

Beginning as the tutees were coming in and sitting down, the tutor asked them one by one what they did during the half-term holiday. The tutor made positive comments and asked a few further questions to find out more detail and other tutees interjected with their own comments (for example 'Oh, I went there too') and questions. This took approximately 20 minutes.

Story discussion (planned discussion):

The tutor asked the whole class for suggestions about what would make a good story and what a good story needs, eliciting suggestions from her tutees. Then, using her laptop and *BBC iPlayer*, the tutor played a recording of a story written by a teenage girl about the death of a relative, which had originally been broadcast on BBC Radio 2. The whole class listened and then the tutor asked each one for their reaction to the story, using open questions to try and elicit a deeper, more empathic response. This took about 15 minutes because in this case the pupils did not have much to say about the story they had heard.

In the News (planned discussion):

This was a regular planned discussion done in several different ways. In every case, news stories from the media were used as stimulus for whole class discussion. For example, the tutor might conduct a whole class discussion by holding up a newspaper article she had brought in so the tutor group could see the headline and then reading the article to them and asking each tutee for their response, using further questioning to elicit a deeper and more nuanced response, to challenge assumptions and encourage discussion between different tutees. The same thing was done by projecting a story from the BBC News website onto the Interactive Whiteboard. This took between 15 and 20 minutes.

Another variation was to give newspapers from that morning to pairs or threes of pupils and ask them to find an article that interested them. Then after 10 minutes, spokespersons from each pair/three were asked to summarise the story for the rest of the tutor group and explain why they found it interesting. The tutor would use this as stimulus for further discussion by using further questioning to elicit a deeper and more nuanced response, to challenge assumptions and encourage discussion between different tutees. This took 20-25 minutes and there was never enough time for all pairs/threes to contribute an article.

A similar activity was done individually using computers and the BBC News website, and again individuals were asked to contribute stories they had found online as a stimulus for further discussion. Once again, this took 20-25 minutes and there was not enough time for every individual to contribute an article.

Buddy Day Grade Review

This was done once a week. The tutor sat down with a pair of students from the same year group (a different pair each week) and, one at a time, they looked at each students' most recent grade review on the tutor's laptop (the students got a grade review at the end of each half term). They looked at the grades each student had been given for each subject, compared them to their target grade for that subject and discussed why they had exceeded, met or missed their target. The tutor asked questions to elicit reflection from each student whose grade review was being discussed, and to elicit observations from the other who, being in the same classes, saw the other student first hand. The tutor then elicited suggestions from each student about how they and their partner could do better. So, for example, the student whose grade review was being discussed might ask his partner 'Do you think I muck about in French?' and their partner might say 'Yeah, maybe you should sit near the front instead.' The tutor noted the actions each student decided to take and returned to these notes the next time this pair discussed their grade reviews.

This took the whole tutor time of 25 minutes, which was just enough to discuss both students' grade reviews.

Writing self-report and Talking about achievements

This activity was related to that half term's theme, which was celebrating achievement. Students had to complete a 'self report' form which included a section (about a third of an A4 page long) about what they had achieved that year (personally and academically). As they did so, they discussed what they were putting down with the student sitting next to them.

The tutor group spent the two tutor time sessions of 25 minutes doing this but some finished quicker than others and discussed other things.

The Describing Game

This game was played as a whole tutor group. One student, the describer, stood at the front of the class and thought of another student in the tutor group. One by one, starting with whomever the tutor chose (for instance, at the top-left of the room), each student asked the describer to describe the person they were thinking of in a particular manner, for example: 'Describe them as a colour.' The describer would reply with their description, for example: 'They're a sort of fiery orange.' From these descriptions the students would try to guess who the describer was thinking of. The first student to guess correctly became the next describer and the tutor would restart the game with the next student in line to ask for a description. This ensured that everyone in turn got a chance to ask for a description.

Rounds of the game varied in length depending on how quickly a student could guess who the describer was thinking of, but five minutes was fairly typical. The game kept the students engaged for the whole tutor time of 25 minutes.

Finding out something new about partner

Students were asked to find out something new about their partner by asking them questions about their hobbies, holidays, family etc. At the end, the tutor asked for feedback from each student about what new thing they had found out.

In the example I saw, the activity did not take a whole tutor time because it was near the end of the year and the students were asking the person they sat next to, who was already very well known to them. With students who were less well-known to each other it would probably take a whole session, especially if students had to circulate (perhaps a bit like speed-dating).

Birthday Party

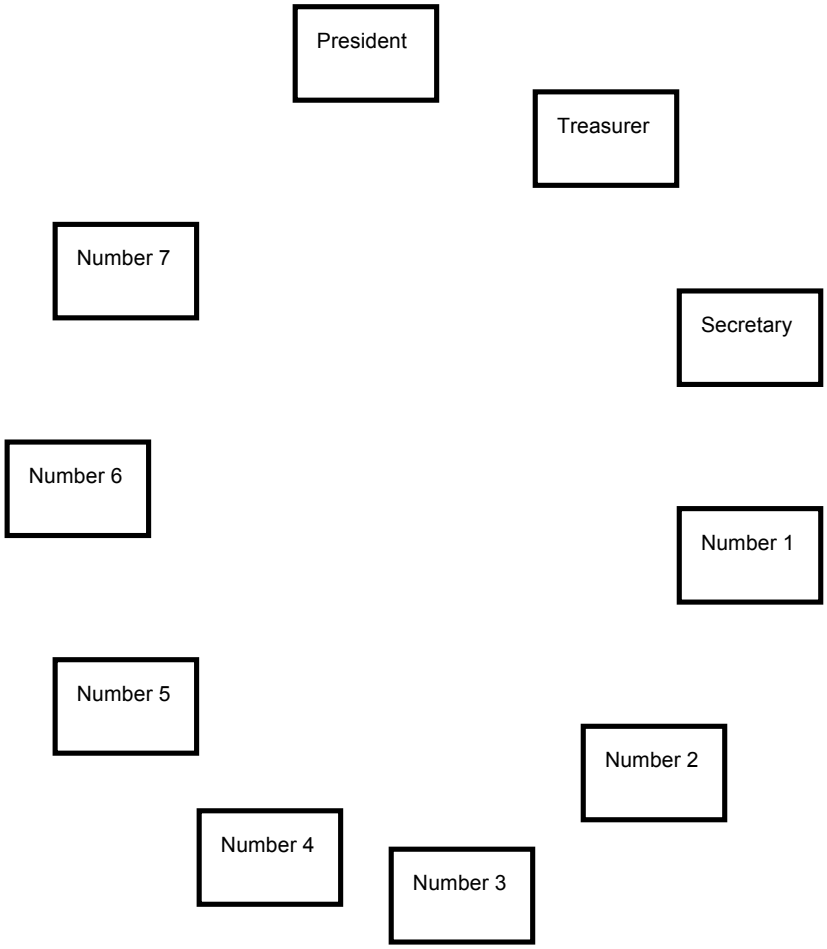
The tutor group celebrated the birthday of one of the students by first eating cake and crisps, and drinking soft drinks, which the tutor had brought in, and then playing musical chairs. Music was also played while the tutor group ate and chatted.

This took the entire tutor time of 25 minutes.

Drama Games

I observed two drama games.

The Clap Rhythm Game (also known as 'President, President'): The players (all the tutees and the tutor) sit in a circle. Each position in the circle has a number rank, with the top one being called the 'President', the next 'Treasurer', then 'Secretary and the rest proceeding in number order from number 1 (see diagram overleaf).



The President starts by clapping in rhythm, which everyone else has to join in and maintain. Then, in time with that rhythm, the President says their own title: ‘President, President’. Next, without breaking the clap rhythm, they say the title of another player, for example ‘Number seven, number seven’. That player then has to say their title (in our example, ‘Number seven, number seven’) followed by the title of another, for example ‘Number two, number two.’ When anyone hesitates, gets words wrong or otherwise breaks the rhythm they go to the bottom position (in the diagram above, that would be number 7) and everyone below them moves up one position. The aim is to be President at the end of the game.

The game I saw took about 10 minutes to play once but the tutor told me that it is quite addictive and her students usually wanted to play it over and over again.

The Tick Tock Game: One person is 'it', and they start off standing in a corner of the room. All the chairs are spread around the room with the rest of the tutor group sitting on them, so that there is only one empty chair. The aim of the person who is 'it' is to get to a free chair and sit on it, but they can only walk slowly with a rocking 'tick tock' motion, whilst saying 'tick tock' in time with their rocking walk. The aim of the rest of the tutor group is to block them by moving to sit on the free chair before the person who is 'it'. Apart from the person who is 'it', only one other person can be out of their seat at any time and no talking is allowed. This means that the tutor group have to be very aware of what is going on, and use eye contact and body language, to ensure that they do not leave a free seat close enough to the person who is 'it'.

When I saw it, the students played it for about 10 minutes after a game of 'President, President'. They found it extremely challenging to do without talking or without more than one person getting out of their seat at a time. The tutor had to be very strict with the rules, but it seems likely that a tutor group who learned to do this well would be working extremely well as a team.

Peer-teaching

The tutor put the students into mixed year group pairs and directed them to each teach the other something. In the example I saw one pair, who were friends with only one year between them, just chatted, whilst the other pair, who had two years between them, only had time for the older one to teach the younger one something (in this case, how to play a few bars on a keyboard in the tutor group room, which was a music room).

In the example I saw, the tutor only gave the two pairs about 10 minutes to do this before moving on to the jewellery-making when the rest of the tutor group arrived from something they had been doing outside the tutor group.

Jewellery-making

The tutor provided each student with a plastic necklace string and metal clasp. She also placed a box full of variously coloured and shaped plastic beads in the middle of the table (the desks were arranged into one

‘conference-style’ island around which the whole tutor group could sit). Then she showed the students how to thread beads onto the string and tie on both ends of the clasp to make a necklace for their mothers. The students then proceeded to make necklaces, chatting and discussing their work as they did so, with the tutor and the eldest helping the others occasionally (but also making their own). The following day the tutor showed them how to make ear-rings in a similar way.

All the resources were provided by the tutor and the activity took one and a half tutor time sessions of 25 minutes each.

Buddy Day (In the News)

In this activity two tutor groups joined together in one tutor room. Most students sat in groups of three from their own tutor group, but one group was mixed. The students then flicked through newspapers provided by the tutors, looking for interesting stories. At the end of the session, each group fed back to the whole room (two tutor groups) about one story they had found, summarising what happened and explaining why they had picked it.

This took one tutor time session (about 20 minutes after the students had gathered together).